













# THE GREAT WORLD WAR









*Grand Duke Nicholas.*

# THE GREAT WORLD WAR

A HISTORY

FRANK AND MARY WHITE

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VOLUME IV

THE CRESSMAN PUBLISHING COMPANY  
34 SOUTHAMPTON STREET STRAND LONDON

1918





# THE GREAT WORLD WAR A HISTORY

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(Vol. IV)

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# THE GREAT WORLD WAR

## VOLUME IV

### CHAPTER I

#### THE FIRST YEAR OF THE WAR

National Stock-taking—Losses and Gains—The Danger on the Eastern Front—Italy and the Allies—The Pact of London—Anniversary Declarations of the Allies—Russia's Undaunted Spirit—Britain's Pledge—Lord Kitchener's Achievement—His First Visit to the Front—The Response from Overseas—Sir Robert Borden's Visit—India's Contributions—The Navy's Part—Losses of the Belligerent Fleets—Losses of Merchant Services—The British Prize Court—Losses in Men—The Year's Trade—The Cotton Problem—Coal Exports—Coal Prices Limitation Act—Increased Cost of Living—Labour and the War—Women Workers—Lord Haldane and the Shortage of Shells—Mr. Lloyd George and the Ministry of Munitions—National Registration—Financing the War—War Loans of the Allies—The Coalition Government—State Insurance against Air-craft and other War Measures—Britain's Awakening.

THE first anniversary of the war affords an opportunity for national stock-taking on the lines of the six months' record published in Volume II. That Britain had just cause for pride in the heroism of her sons both on land and sea our pages have borne abundant testimony—pride, as His Majesty said, in the voluntary response from British subjects all over the world, "who sacrificed home, fortune, and life itself in order that another might not inherit the free Empire which their ancestors and mine had built". Yet the end seemed farther off on the first anniversary than at the end of the first six months. Britain had buckled on her armour, but was still far from ready to take

the field in all her strength. The preliminary offensive on the Western front had slightly improved the Allies' position, and the Germans had again been prevented from reaching Calais in the second Battle of Ypres; but the whole campaign in this theatre had once more settled down to a murderous duel of bombs, mines, bullets and shells of every description, with the Germans still overwhelmingly superior in munitions and guns. In Gallipoli, as we have seen, what had begun as a minor operation had developed through a series of costly disappointments into a major operation of increasing importance and difficulty. The Gallipoli campaign, however, had not been wholly valueless. It had destroyed no

inconsiderable portion of the flower of the Turkish army, relieved the Russians on the Caucasian front, and prevented any renewal for the time being of the first attack on Egypt, besides helping the victorious march in the preliminary stages of the expedition under General Sir John Nixon through Mesopotamia towards Bagdad, and postponing the decision of Bulgaria to throw in her lot with the Central Powers.

The gravest outlook at the end of the first twelve months was in the Eastern theatre of war, where the Germanic Powers were sweeping Russia farther and farther back within her own borderland and conspiring to induce as many as possible of the Balkan States either to join forces

with them, or at least refrain from helping the Entente Alliance. Fortunately the chief object of these mighty Germanic thrusts remained unattained. The Russian armies, like the French, were still intact at the end of the first year of war, and the spirit of all the Allies remained undaunted. If the enemy's aim had been so to weaken one or other of the Entente Powers as to bring about a separate treaty of peace, leaving him free to hurl the whole of his strength on one front, he had failed signally. The end of the year found none of the Allies in a mood to relinquish the struggle, however much some of them had suffered. Italy had now been added to that strength, and though she had not as yet bound herself, as the other Entente



From an Official Photograph

A Fine Capture in the Dardanelles: British troops driving in a flock of Turkish sheep



Celebrating Italy's Entry into the War: a Placard for the Germans hoisted in the French Trenches

Powers had bound themselves, to make no separate peace with the enemy, her declarations to conquer at any cost were unmistakable.<sup>1</sup> "The

<sup>1</sup> Italy joined the Pact of London in the following November, engaging not to conclude peace separately during the war. The English text of the Five-Power Declaration was as follows: The Italian Government having decided to accede to the Declaration between the British, French, and Russian Governments, signed at London on the 5th September, 1914, which Declaration was acceded to by the Japanese Government on the 19th October, 1915, the undersigned, duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, hereby declare as follows:—

The British, French, Italian, Japanese, and Russian Governments mutually engage not to conclude peace separately during the present war. The five Governments agree that when terms of peace come to be discussed no one of the Allies will demand conditions of peace without the previous agreement of each of the other Allies. In faith whereof the undersigned have signed this Declaration and have affixed thereto their seals. Done at London, in quintuplicate, this 30th day of November, 1915.

E. GREY.  
PAUL CAMEON.  
IMPERIALI.

K. INOUE.  
BENCKENDORFF.

Allied Powers are united in purpose," declared the British Prime Minister at the next Lord Mayor's Banquet in London. "We stand or fall together. All the stories which from time to time are circulated by the enemy, of piecemeal arrangement and of a separate or one-sided peace, are nothing but idle and worthless chatter." It was in the same Guildhall that Mr. Asquith, earlier in the year—on June 29—had uttered those resolute words which were Britain's pledge to continue the struggle until Germany's military power was "finally and fully destroyed". "We shall fight to the end," declared the Prime Minister on that occasion in a sentence destined to become historic, "to the last farthing of our money, to the last ounce of our



strength, to the last drop of our blood." The French Prime Minister was equally emphatic in Paris on April 14, when he vowed that France would continue to fight until the same final victory had been won. "In common with her Allies," he declared, "France

in triumph on August 4, faced the ordeal with magnificent courage and redoubled resolution, renewing her pledges on the anniversary of the war without abating in the least her confidence in the ultimate result of the struggle. A new army of 3,000,000



Russia renews her Pledge: the famous Foncorijski Regiment giving three cheers for Britain's King

will not contemplate the idea of peace until, together with them, she has driven the aggressor from the soil of Belgium, regained her own territorial integrity, and by a joint effort freed Europe from Prussian militarism." Russia, in spite of the staggering blows which sent her reeling back from Galicia and Poland, and enabled the Germanic armies to enter Warsaw

was then being organized among her inexhaustible reserves of men, while both sexes worked night and day in the munition factories in such a united effort as had never been known in the history of Russia before. It was said that the Russian public had hoped for a strong offensive in the West, while the Germans were making their overwhelming onset in the Eastern theatre

of war. "This may be so," stated Count Benckendorff, the Russian ambassador in London in an anniversary message on the situation, "but not a trace of ill-feeling has been manifested, and the sober view which considers only military possibilities has always prevailed." The Tsar himself, a month later, revealed the true reason of the Russian retreat from Galicia and Poland when he addressed his newly created committee of national defence on the subject of the more speedy equipment of the army with munitions—"the one object for which our valiant troops wait in order to stop the foreign invasion and to bring success once more to our armies". These words were emphasized, and the defiant cry of the whole Russian nation echoed, by the President of the Duma on the same occasion, when, with all the eloquence at his command, he protested energetically "against any idea of concluding peace until the enemy had been absolutely vanquished".

That was the spirit in which the Entente Powers contemplated the prospects of the second year of war, conscious that while every month increased their own strength and resources, those of the enemy must surely diminish. The chief lessons taught during the first twelve months, and learnt at bitter cost, were that big batteries were as essential as big battalions, and that modern tactics had been revolutionized by machine-guns. It was the immense superiority of the Germans in these respects, and the perfection of their organization, which had given them their initial

successes in the West, and enabled them to hold on to the positions won in the autumn of 1914. But the lessons had not been learnt in vain, and with time on their side and a population—even when we exclude India, the Dominions, and Japan—double that of their enemies, the Allies proceeded to apply their teaching with grim determination and unshaken confidence in the final issue.

Napoleon, when asked what were the three essential things for a successful war, replied: "Money, money, money". To-day, as Lord Kitchener reminded the citizens of London at the public meeting in the Guildhall on July 9, 1915, we vary the phrase by saying: "Men, material, and money". Let us consider Britain's share in these essentials up to the first anniversary of the war. Not aspiring to the military strength of the great Continental nations, Sir John French's little army, perfectly trained, and sent abroad without a hitch, in August and September, 1914, consisted only of six infantry and two cavalry divisions. A year later, though the casualties meantime were nearly double the full strength of that immortal host, the Field-Marshal had under his command an army which enabled him in the following month to take the field with a total force approaching 1,000,000 men. To these, of course, were to be added the increasing armies in Gallipoli, in Egypt, in Mesopotamia, and the African theatres of war, as well as our reserves and our garrisons for the defence of the United Kingdom and the outlying parts of the Empire. Precise figures



are not available for the actual anniversary, but in the middle of the following month Mr. Asquith, in the House of Commons, placed the aggregate at "not far short of three millions of men, first and last, who had offered themselves to the country".

It was a noble achievement, this immense muster of volunteers for a Continental war by a nation which did not

and was still coming forward, to create and maintain these new armies, had not played a worthy part in the struggle. "The manner in which all classes have responded to the call of patriotism", he said, in calling for more recruits in September, 1915, "is magnificent, and I for one do not for an instant doubt that whatever sacrifices may prove to be necessary to bring



The "New Army" in Training: Lord Kitchener inspecting Artillery at Chelmsford

claim to be a great military Power, and placed stronger reliance than ever for the safety of its own shores upon its matchless navy. It was also a great personal triumph for Lord Kitchener, who had realized from the first that British armies on the largest scale would be needed to reinforce our Allies, and saw that they were forthcoming. Lord Kitchener was not among those ardent advocates of conscription who complained at the time that the manhood of the United Kingdom, which had already come forward,

this gigantic war to a successful conclusion will be cheerfully undertaken by our people."

It was not long after the first divisions of the "New" Army—"K's men"—arrived in France that Lord Kitchener himself paid his first visit to the front to see how they were shaping. Sir John French had already reported favourably on them as likely "to prove a valuable addition to any fighting force". The artillery had been tested behind the firing-line, and their shooting declared to be extremely good.

"As for the infantry," said Sir John, "their physique is excellent, while their bearing and appearance on parade reflects great credit on the officers and staffs responsible for their training. The units appear to be thoroughly well officered and commanded. The equipment is in good order and efficient."

able for the first fifteen months, and are sufficiently striking. Canada in that period had contributed 96,000 officers and men to the Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders. Australia was only a trifle behind with 92,000.

All that remained was the stern test of actual fighting. It was in July, long before their opening battle, that Lord Kitchener spent his first two crowded days at the front, visiting also the seasoned veterans of the Regular Army, the Indian Cavalry Brigade, and as many other units as possible, besides paying a flying visit to the desolate ruins of Ypres, accompanied by Mr. Asquith, and to the King of the Belgians in the Belgian area. The second day was spent by the War Minister, alone, in an extended tour round the southern half of the army, concluding with a journey thence to the head-quarters of one of the French armies, where he was shown round some of the French defences. It was only two days later that Lord Kitchener was making his appeal for more men at the public meeting in London already referred to, his words sounding like a moving message straight from the British trenches: "One feels that our gallant soldiers in the fighting-line are beckoning, with an urgency at once imperious and pathetic, to those who remain at home to come out and play their part too".

From east to west, from north to south, the response throughout the Empire was far greater than anyone had ever anticipated. The actual figures for the year of Oversea troops were not published, but they are avail-



The British War Minister on the Western Front: Lord Kitchener in one of the advanced French trenches, followed by M. Millerand, French Minister for War, and General Joffre.

New Zealand had increased her contributions to 25,000, and South Africa, having completed her triumphant campaign in German South-West Africa, had supplied timely contingents for service in Eastern Central Africa, besides furnishing 6500 men for service in Europe. Newfoundland had sent 1600 men, in addition to substantial contributions to the Royal Navy.

From the West Indies had come 2000 men, and contingents had been provided by Ceylon and Fiji. In these figures, remarkable and significant as they were, Mr. Asquith—who furnished them to the House of Commons—included only the forces furnished in the shape of complete units. No account was taken of the preparation made for the maintenance of these units in the field, nor for the stream of men from all parts of the Empire, as well as from other lands all over the world, who made their own way to the United Kingdom to answer the call to arms.

An Imperial precedent of the deepest significance was the attendance, on July 14, 1915, of Sir Robert Borden, Prime Minister of Canada, at a meeting of the Cabinet Council in London, at the invitation of Mr. Asquith. Sir Robert Borden had arrived in the motherland to discuss the war with the Imperial authorities and visit the gallant Canadians on the battle-fields of France. Though other Oversea statesmen had attended meetings of the Imperial Defence, none had ever before sat with "His Majesty's servants" at a Cabinet Council as one of themselves. The old order, as Sir Robert said in his eloquent speech at the great patriotic meeting which he attended with Mr. Balfour at the London Opera House on the first anniversary of the war, was passing away amid the mighty events of the Great World War.

And the message he brought from Canada was in keeping with the resolution passed not only at the meeting in question, but at similar war anniversary gatherings throughout the country:

"That on this anniversary of the declaration of a righteous war this meeting records its inflexible determination to continue to a victorious end the struggle in maintenance of those ideals of liberty and justice which are the common and sacred cause of the Allies".

Major-General Samuel Hughes, Canadian Minister of Militia and Defence, who was made a Knight Commander of the Bath by the King during the summer of 1915, also visited the Western front and paid a glowing tribute on his return to the heroism and spirit of the whole British army.

India's splendid contributions continued on the same unprecedented scale as in the first six months of the war. Her warriors were fighting side by side with British troops in all the principal theatres of war, the Native Princes meantime carrying on the ancient traditions of chivalry and munificence associated with their race. Besides the Chiefs whose personal services were accepted at the beginning of the war, the rulers of Nawannagar—better known as Prince Ranjitsinhji, the famous cricketer—Rajkot, Bariya, Jamkhadi, Akalkot, Savanur, Barwani, Loharu, and Wankaner have been permitted to go on active service in one or other of the spheres of operations. In addition to the Imperial Service troops originally selected from among those offered, contingents from the following States had also been accepted for service in India or abroad: Junagadh, Khairpur, Nawannagar, Bhaunagar, Janjira, Tehri, Bahawalpur, Maler Kotla, Sirmur, Bhopal, and Idar. Lastly, as Lord



Crewe said, our debt was not less due to the whole people of India, men and women alike, who came forward, according to their opportunities and means, to testify their support to the Government of the King-Emperor,

the constant strain of twelve months' readiness for immediate battle, kept watch and ward with a growing preponderance of strength over any naval force that the Germans could possibly muster, while minor squadrons with



Drawn by Christopher Clark

Naval Co-operation in the Dardanelles: Towing one of the big guns ashore

showing that they knew our cause to be the cause of righteousness and justice.

As for the Royal Navy—"father and mother of the army", in the words of Sir Ian Hamilton in one of his dispatches, and surer shield than ever of our island shores—it continued its ceaseless vigil in the northern seas, where the Grand Fleet, inured to

the Allied Fleets kept the oceans clear of the enemy's commerce, secured the Allies' supplies all over the world, and not only transported troops wherever necessary, but often shared in their operations. Fraught though it had been with few dramatic surprises, the first year's record of the Royal Navy was a never-failing tonic for

Britons in the darkest hours of the war, and an inspiration for generations to come. It was neatly summed up by Mr. Balfour, as First Lord of the Admiralty, in a letter written on July 31, 1915, to Mr. Tuohy, of the *New York World*, in response to Count Reventlow's communication in praise of the achievements of the German Fleet:

"If anyone desires to know whether the British Fleet has during the last year proved itself worthy of its traditions, there is a very simple method of arriving at the truth. There are seven, and only seven, functions which a fleet can perform:—

"It may drive the enemy's commerce off the sea.

"It may protect its own commerce.

"It may render the enemy's fleet impotent.

"It may make the transfer of enemy's troops across the sea impossible, whether for attack or defence.

"It may transport its own troops where it will.

"It may secure their supplies, and (in fitting circumstances) it may assist their operations.

"All these functions have so far been successfully performed by the British Fleet. No German merchant-ship is to be found on the ocean. Allied commerce is more secure from attack, legitimate and illegitimate, than it was after Trafalgar. The German High Sea Fleet has not as yet ventured beyond the security of its protected waters. No invasion has been attempted of these islands. British troops, in numbers unparalleled in history, have moved to and fro across the seas, and have been effectively supported on shore. The greatest of military Powers has seen its colonies wrested from it one by one, and has not been able to land a man or a gun in their defence. Of a fleet which has done this we may not only say that it has done much, but that no fleet has ever done more."

Meantime the much-vaunted process of attrition, upon which the naval leaders of Germany had relied to reduce the strength of the British Fleet ship by ship until the two great antagonists could meet on fairly level terms, had proved a complete failure. Their submarines had done little except, as Mr. Balfour said, "to fix an indelible stain upon the fair name of the German Navy", and were being slowly but surely reduced to impotence in the waters round the British Isles. Before the end of August, 1915, Lord Selborne was able to announce that "the Navy had the submarine menace well in hand". We had, it is true, lost a considerable number of warships in the course of the year's operations, but when we remember that with the help of our Allies we had swept the enemy from all the highways and byways of the seas, save in his own protected waters, the cost in naval material had been relatively insignificant. Without a decisive blow Britain had established her sovereignty of the seas with an absoluteness never attained even in the days of Nelson himself. Moreover, all our chief losses, save one small battleship and six cruisers, were in men-of-war belonging to our surplus fleet—ships which had seen their best days and were scarcely reckoned in comparisons between the vital forces of the rival navies; whereas the German losses, in almost every case, had been among the newer types, launched since the beginning of the present century. This is shown at a glance in the following comparative table of the chief naval losses during the first year of the war:—



# Twelve Months' Naval Losses

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## ENTENTE POWERS

## CENTRAL POWERS

### BRITAIN

Battleships—	Tons.	Launched.
<i>Majestic</i> ...	14,900	1895
<i>Formidable</i> ...	15,000	1898
<i>Goliath</i> ...	12,950	1898
<i>Irresistible</i> ...	15,000	1898
<i>Ocean</i> ...	12,950	1898
<i>Bulwark</i> ...	15,000	1899
<i>Triumph</i> ...	11,800	1903
	97,600	

Cruisers—	Tons.	Launched.
<i>Hawke</i> ...	7,350	1891
<i>Pegasus</i> ...	2,135	1897
<i>Hermes</i> ...	5,600	1898
<i>Cressy</i> ...	12,000	1899
<i>Aboukir</i> ...	12,000	1900
<i>Hogue</i> ...	12,000	1900
<i>Good Hope</i> ...	14,100	1901
<i>Monmouth</i> ...	9,800	1901
<i>Pathfinder</i> ...	2,940	1904
<i>Amphion</i> ...	3,440	1911
	81,365	
Total ...	178,965	

### FRANCE

Battleship—	Tons.	Launched.
<i>Bouvet</i> ...	12,007	1898
Cruiser—		
<i>Léon Gambetta</i> ...	12,351	1901
Gunboat—		
<i>Zélée</i> ...	680	1899
	25,038	

### RUSSIA

Cruisers—	Tons.	Launched.
<i>Jemtchug</i> ...	3,050	1903
<i>Pallada</i> ...	7,775	1906
	10,825	

### JAPAN

Cruiser—	Tons.	Launched.
<i>Takachiho</i> ...	3,700	1885

### ITALY

Cruisers—	Tons.	Launched.
<i>Giuseppe Garibaldi</i> ...	7,234	1899
<i>Amalfi</i> ...	9,956	1908
	17,190	

### GERMANY

Battleship—	Tons.	Launched.
Deutschland Class <sup>1</sup> ...	13,000	1903-4
Cruisers—		
<i>Hela</i> ...	2,040	1895
<i>Ariadne</i> ...	2,660	1900
<i>Friedrich Karl</i> ...	8,858	1902
<i>Yorck</i> ...	9,050	1904
<i>Gneisenau</i> ...	14,420	1906
<i>Scharnhorst</i> ...	11,420	1906
<i>Königsberg</i> ...	3,550	1906
<i>Leipzig</i> ...	3,200	1906
<i>Dresden</i> ...	3,544	1907
<i>Emden</i> ...	3,544	1908
<i>Blücher</i> ...	15,550	1908
<i>Kolberg</i> ...	4,232	1908
<i>Nürnberg</i> ...	3,396	1908
<i>Von der Tann</i> ...	18,700	1909
<i>Köln</i> ...	4,350	1909
<i>Mainz</i> ...	4,350	1909
<i>Goeben</i> <sup>2</sup> ...	22,640	1911
<i>Breslau</i> <sup>3</sup> ...	4,500	1911
<i>Magdeburg</i> ...	4,500	1911
<i>Karlsruhe</i> ...	4,820	1912
	162,324	

[Besides six gunboats, three of them of 900 tons displacement and one of 650 tons; and a large number of armed merchantmen.]

### AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

Cruisers—	Tons.	Launched.
<i>Kaiserin Elizabeth</i> ...	4,000	1890
<i>Zenta</i> ...	2,300	1897
	6,300	

### TURKEY

Battleship—	Tons.	Launched.
<i>Messudieh</i> ...	9,120	1874
Cruisers—		
<i>Medjidieh</i> ...	3,432	1904
<i>Buk-i-Satvet</i> ...	740	1907
	13,292	

<sup>1</sup> The Russian official statement did not specify the name of the vessel sunk, but it was supposed to be the *Pommern*.

<sup>2</sup> *Von der Tann* believed to have been destroyed.

<sup>3</sup> *Goeben* and *Breslau* were "lost" to Turkey.

# The Great World War

Our losses had been more than made good long before the first anniversary came round, when, actually and relatively, our margin of safety was far greater than before the war. Details — as Mr. Archibald Hurd wrote in a striking article on “Our Trafalgar and its Sequel”, contributed to the *Fortnightly Review* for August, 1914, to which we are indebted for the foregoing table—were wisely withheld by the Admiralty, but it was an open secret that additions had been made to the British fleet since the outbreak of war “in proportion to our creative capacity as the greatest maritime country in the world, with a power of expansion much greater than that of Germany”.

How German shipping had been swept off the seas was shown in an official list giving the figures for the first twelve months of the war, embracing all parts of the world:—

	Ships.	Tonnage.
Detained in United Kingdom and Oversea British ports ...	146	315,181
Captured in German Colonial ports ...	21	43,367
Captured and sunk by British ...	8	29,424
Captured by British ...	75	186,765
Detained in Egyptian ports ...	18	86,058
Detained in Belgian ports ...	89	136,920
Detained in French and Russian ports ...	95	112,945
Detained in Italian ports ...	36	153,876
Captured and sunk by Allies ...	4	3,822
Captured by Allies ...	25	37,985
Sunk or damaged by submarines, mines, or explosions ...	4	6,975
Totals ...	521	1,113,318

The total number of ships of all nationalities captured, detained, sunk, or damaged during the same period is shown in the following table:—

	Ships.	Tonnage.
German ...	521	1,113,298
British ...	476	980,773
Neutral ...	418	593,820
Austrian ...	75	254,282
Allied — French, Russian, Belgian ...	82	128,177
Turkish ..	56	18,508
Totals ...	1,628	3,088,858

Eighty British vessels were detained in German ports at the outbreak of war, over 60 of which were lying at the port of Hamburg. The total bag in British ships which fell to the commerce - destroying German cruisers *Emden*, *Leipzig*, *Karlsruhe*, *Königsberg*, *Dresden*, and armed auxiliaries amounted to 56; but all the enemy cruisers and auxiliaries were eventually destroyed or chased off the sea. Where Germany excelled was in the unenviable distinction of establishing a record in the destruction of merchant-vessels by submarines, with a reckless disregard of innocent lives. The British ships sunk in this way, including the *Lusitania*, numbered in all 104, with a tonnage of 304,428. British trawlers sunk by submarines to the end of July, 1915, numbered 105, with a tonnage of 15,087, in addition to which 31 of the same craft foundered through mines or explosions. The list of neutral vessels standing to the German submarines' discredit during the same period totalled 43—the tonnage amounting to 59,299—distributed as follows:—

Norwegian ...	22	Dutch ...	2
Danish ...	8	Portuguese ...	2
Swedish ...	8	Greek ...	1

Sixty neutrals were also sunk by mines or explosions. Germany, in addition, captured and sank five neutral

# The Casualty Lists

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ships, chief among them being the *William P. Frye*, in the Atlantic. For the first time since the Crimea the British Prize Court was revived, the gross proceeds of vessels and cargoes up to the end of August, 1915, amounting to £4,104,804. After deducting freight, expenses of realization, &c., the net amount then standing to the credit of the Prize Fund was close upon £3,000,000. Up to that time there had been no distribution of prize-money, the proceeds of the sales, by Orders in Council, being allotted either to the Admiralty, in the case of vessels captured on the high seas, or to the Crown, in the case of vessels seized in port.

When we come to the year's cost of the war in British officers and men, both in the navy and the army, the total figures make all previous lists shrink to insignificance. The table below is compiled from the figures given by the Prime Minister in parliamentary papers at the end of July, 1915, giving the total number of British casualties during the first fifty weeks of the war.

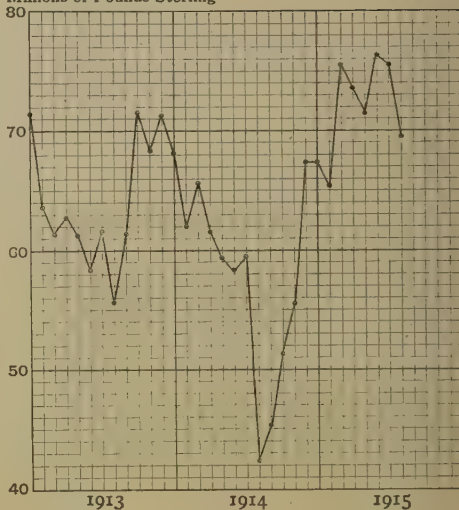
The whole Crimean campaign did not cost us more than 20,000 odd men, of whom only some 12 per cent were estimated to have died in battle. Our total losses in the last South African War amounted to no more than 32,000 in killed, wounded, and prisoners, though they seemed heavy enough at

ARMY CASUALTIES (First 50 Weeks)				NAVY CASUALTIES (First 50 Weeks)			
<i>[The Dardanelles figures include the Naval Division]</i>							
KILLED—				OFFICERS—			
		Officers.	Men.	Killed	...	...	499
France ...	...	3,288	48,372	Wounded	...	...	87
Dardanelles ...	...	567	7,567	Missing	...	...	29
Other theatres ...	...	145	1,445	Total ...	...	...	615
Total ...	...	4,000	57,384				
WOUNDED—				MEN—			
		Officers.	Men.	Killed	...	...	7,430
France ...	...	6,803	156,308	Wounded	...	...	787
Dardanelles ...	...	1,379	28,635	Missing	...	...	274
Other theatres ...	...	248	3,247	Total ...	...	...	8,491
Total ...	...	8,430	188,190				
MISSING—				Navy Total ...			
		Officers.	Men.		...	...	9,106
France ...	...	1,163	50,969				
Dardanelles ...	...	198	10,892				
Other theatres ...	...	22	641				
Total ...	...	1,383	62,502				
ARMY TOTALS—				PREVIOUS ARMY FIGURES			
		Officers.	Men.	<i>[Earlier official figures show the varying rate of losses in the army during the first 50 weeks of war.]</i>			
France ...	...	11,254	255,649	13 weeks of war up to Oct. 31	...	57,000	
Dardanelles ...	...	2,144	47,094	26 " " " Feb. 4	...	104,000	
Other theatres ...	...	415	5,333	36 " " " April 11	...	139,347	
Totals ...	...	13,813	308,076	43 " " " May 31	...	258,069	
Army Total ...	...	321,889					

## The Great World War

the time. The British army casualties in the first year of the Great War, to give another illustration, were more than double all the losses by death and wounds suffered by the Germans in the war against France in 1870-1, and many thousands more than France's fearful losses in the same campaign. Fortunately, owing to the high percentage of recoveries from wounds—thanks to the tremendous advances of surgical science and the splendid organization of the whole medical service of the army—the net permanent wastage was very much less than the figures quoted. And if Britain's losses had been appalling, they were still small by comparison with the enormous sacrifices of the great Continental Powers, who were able to plunge into the war with millions of men at the outset. According to an estimate published by the French Relief Fund in May, 1915, the French had already lost 400,000 killed, 700,000 wounded, and 300,000 prisoners or missing. Russia's losses were heavier still. But the greatest loser of all—and therein lay the key to the whole Allied plan of campaign—was Germany herself, flinging her armies with prodigal waste on both fronts at once, knowing that her only hope rested in bringing one side at least to its knees so that she could hurl herself on the other with all the stupendous force at her command. Austria-Hungary's losses were also colossal—there were 700,000 of her prisoners of war in Russia and Serbia, and her losses in killed and wounded up to the first anniversary of the war were put at a million and a half—but Germany remained

Millions of Pounds Sterling



How British Imports were affected during the First Twelve Months of the War

more than ever the main factor, all estimates being based on the limit of her resources in men and material. When Germany was exhausted the war would automatically cease. From the first 289 official casualty lists it was known that the total Prussian losses announced up to July 31, 1915, had reached 1,641,569; and these figures were by no means up to date. Nor did they include 207 Bavarian, 233 Würtemberg, 176 Saxon, and 41 naval casualty lists. A War Office estimate, based on these and other reliable statistics, computed the casualties of the German army to the beginning of August, 1915, "including constant temporary wastage", at 2,000,000.

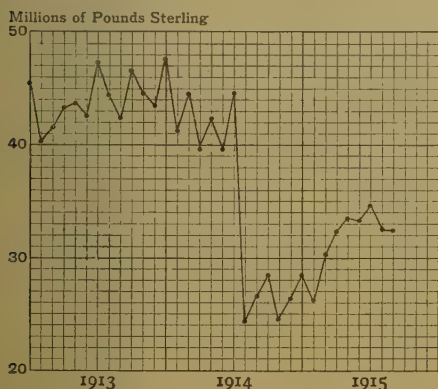
In our last survey, covering the first six months of the war, we showed how British trade had been affected, and how well, thanks to the protection afforded by our navy, it had adapted itself to the new conditions. The



accompanying diagrams continue the figures for British imports and exports, from the Board of Trade returns, through the second six months, thus showing at a glance the ebb and flow of commerce to and from these islands after the significant drop in August, 1914. A comparison of the figures for that month with those of August, 1915, shows that imports had increased by no less than £27,000,000, while exports were up to the amount of more than £8,000,000. Re-exports of foreign and colonial merchandise had also risen by nearly £3,000,000. From the economic point of view the increasing excess of imports over exports, setting the balance of trade against this country, and adding to the difficulty of dealing with the American exchange, was a disturbing factor, but it emphasized the futility of Germany's so-called submarine "blockade". The most striking fact revealed by the official returns was that our total foreign trade in August, 1915, amounted to £109,259,299 against £108,236,934 in August, 1913.

The higher prices paid for our purchases abroad since the outbreak of hostilities largely accounted for the increase in the values of imports, especially for food, drink, and tobacco. The figures under these heads alone, in August, 1915, exceeded those for the corresponding month of 1914 by more than £11,369,000. Though double the quantity of wheat came from India in the same month as compared with the previous August, there were smaller arrivals from Canada and the United States, making a reduction, all told, of 2,420,603 cwt.; yet our payments were more than £558,000 higher. More grain of other kinds was imported, chiefly from the United States and Argentina, to make up the deficit. Raw materials and manufactured articles also rose considerably in price in almost every item, the imports of wood alone, in August, 1915, being over £2,041,000 in excess of August, 1914, and wool upwards of £1,145,000. Silk fabrics rose during the same period above £1,114,000, and metal manufactures no less than £2,488,000. The total increase under the head of raw materials was £6,223,848, and of manufactured articles of £9,472,688. These figures represent the increase of August, 1915, over August, 1914.

The export trade was still hampered by a shortage of labour and the growing number of industries whose whole energies were transferred to war work. It must be remembered, too, that the vast exports and imports of the British Government itself were not included in the Board of Trade returns, which otherwise would reveal a still greater



How British Exports were Affected during the First Twelve Months of the War

increase under both heads. The growth in exports during August, 1915, over the first month of the war, was chiefly noticeable in coal, which rose some 644,000 tons in quantity and about £1,339,000 in value; iron and steel manufactures, which increased roughly £1,238,000; cotton yarn and piece goods, £1,664,000; woollens close upon £1,200,000, and chemicals, £706,011. France was our best customer in the chief of these items. In coal, for instance, she increased her orders by nearly 1,000,000 tons, the bulk of her own mines being in the hands of the enemy. This more than balanced the tremendous drop in exports of coal to Russia from 169,000 odd to not quite 6000 tons, as well as the total loss of the German, Austro-Hungarian, and Belgian markets. France also made up for our losses in other lands in regard to woollen and worsted manufactures and cotton yarn and piece goods, her orders for woollen tissues in August, 1915, being for no less than 4,530,100 yards, as against a mere 166,000 yards in August, 1914, a total value of £970,539 against £49,745. Cotton piece goods rose from 450,000 yards to 20,482,700 yards, a jump in value from £11,060 to more than £530,000.

The most important cotton problem of the year was the question of preventing supplies from reaching the enemy. For the first seven and a half months of the year the Government, with a tenderness for neutral interests which roused considerable criticism at home, allowed raw and waste cotton to pass freely into Germany and Austria-Hungary. "We had to be very

careful," Mr. Asquith explained to the House of Commons, "in the exercise of our belligerent rights, not unduly to infringe the trading interests and the legitimate susceptibilities of neutral Powers with whom we did not desire to provoke an unnecessary or gratuitous quarrel", but he admitted that a great deal of this cotton, which was a necessary ingredient in the manufacture of some very formidable kinds of munition, reached the enemy which ought not to have reached him. In March, 1915, measures were taken by an Order in Council to "prevent commodities of any kind" from reaching the enemy. Under this Order in Council cotton ships could be intercepted and diverted to British ports, to be sent, when necessary, to our Prize Courts, but neither their cargoes nor the ships themselves could be confiscated.

This arrangement, while undoubtedly attended with a large measure of success, was open to serious objection, both on the grounds of weakness and of international law, and laid us open to the charge of ruling the sea with something of the arrogance of the Germans on land, but without reaping any corresponding advantage. The only way out, in spite of awkward precedents of our own against taking such a step, was to place cotton on the list as absolute contraband, thus making cargoes and ships alike liable to confiscation in the case of illegitimate traffic. This was done in August, 1915, the Foreign Office *communiqué* which announced the decision adding:

"While circumstances might have justified such action at an earlier period, His Majesty's Government are glad to think



that local conditions of American interests likely to be affected are more favourable for such a step than they were a year ago; and, moreover, His Majesty's Government contemplate the initiation of measures to relieve, as far as possible, any abnormal depression which might temporarily disturb market conditions."

France acted simultaneously with Britain in placing cotton on the list of absolute contraband, this not only strengthening the authority under which the Allies took action, but placing it in strict conformity with international law. That the Germans had made the most of their golden opportunity in this connection in the first seven and a half months of the war was obvious from the excess shipments to the neighbouring neutral States, official American figures showing that some of these had imported during that period from sixteen to eighteen times as much as in normal times. The measures taken under the Order in Council had checked this excessive increase, as was shown by the Foreign Office figures relating to the import of raw and waste cotton into Scandinavia and Holland for May, June, and July, 1915, as compared with the normal average importation:

It was a fair deduction from this that, apart from other measures taken with the same object in view, Germany had not, during the period in question, received any considerable supply of cotton through those countries. Her imports alone from the United States in 1913-4 had amounted to some 2,666,000 bales.

The jump in coal exports, partly due to a maximum price being fixed in this country by the Government, with the result that coal at once began to flow in greater quantities to countries where no such maximum existed, was controlled in August, 1915. An Order in Council was then passed by which the exportation of coal and coke was no longer permitted freely to Allied countries, and prohibited to all destinations abroad other than British possessions or protectorates. The object of the new rule was not to restrict the reasonable requirements of the Allies, especially, of course, of France, but to keep a supervising eye over the whole export trade, in order to prevent undue advantage being taken of special inducements to ship coal abroad. The Coal Prices Limi-

THREE MONTHS' COTTON IMPORTS IN 1915.					NORMAL IMPORTS FOR THREE MONTHS.		
	May.	June.	July.	May to July.	Total.	Total, less all exports.	Total, less exports to enemy countries.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Norway ...	532	1,018	482	2,032	966	945	966
Sweden ...	444	2,945	3,138	6,527	5,900	5,679	5,832
Denmark ...	156	293	1,087	1,536	1,617	1,581	1,599
Holland ...	924	1,935	4,390	7,249	26,820	8,352	11,004
Scandinavia and Holland	2,056	6,191	9,097	17,344	35,303	16,557	19,401

tation Act, passed to have effect "during the continuance of the present war and a period of six months thereafter", controlled the price at the pit mouth—not the price to the householder, though this in due course was naturally protected to a certain extent. Prices remained high throughout the summer, but there was not the exorbitant rise that might otherwise have taken place.

"Lowest Summer Prices" for coal in London were advertised in August, 1915, at from 31s. to 33s. for special house, and from 28s. to 30s. for kitchen coal, the cheaper kind being still affected more seriously than the others. The family budget throughout the country became a more serious problem with every succeeding month, compelling housewives carefully to scrutinize each item of domestic expenditure, and incidentally teaching

them many new and unsuspected ideas in economy. Prices would probably have been considerably higher, still but for the close watch kept by the Government. The Board of Trade, for instance, called together an advisory committee of persons who influenced the wholesale prices of groceries. The committee met once a fortnight to recommend the prices to be adopted by the retailers, and the Board of Trade saw to it that these prices were fair and reasonable. Prices varied, of course, in different parts of the kingdom, but the following was a London housewife's weekly budget for July, 1915, which, without attempting completeness, may be accepted as fairly representative of the increased cost of living among the middle classes since the beginning of the war. It was the weekly budget of a middle-class family of five people,

WEEKLY BUDGET ILLUSTRATING THE YEAR'S INCREASE IN THE COST OF LIVING.

	July, 1915.	July, 1914.	Increase.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Bread (12 half-quartern loaves, at 4½d. each) ...	0 4 3	0 2 8½	0 1 6½
Meat (12 lb., average, 1s. 1d. per pound) ...	0 13 0	0 11 6	0 1 6
Butter (2½ lb., at 1s. 6d. per pound) ...	0 3 9	0 2 11	0 0 10
Milk (10 quarts, at 5d. per quart) ...	0 4 2	0 3 4	0 0 10
Eggs (12 new-laid, at 2s. 6d. per dozen) ...	0 2 6	0 1 6	0 1 0
„ (12 cooking, at 2s. per dozen) ...	0 2 0	0 1 0	0 1 0
Bacon (2 lb., at 1s. 6d. per pound) ...	0 3 0	0 2 0	0 1 0
Cheese (1½ lb.) ...	0 1 6	0 1 3	0 0 3
Tea (1 lb.) ...	0 1 10	0 1 6	0 0 4
Coffee (½ lb.) ...	0 0 10	0 0 10	0 0 0
Cocoa (½ lb.) ...	0 0 10	0 0 9	0 0 1
Sugar (3 lb., at 4d. per pound) ...	0 1 0	0 0 7½	0 0 4½
Cooking sugar (2 lb., at 3d. per pound) ...	0 0 6	0 0 5	0 0 1
Fish ...	0 3 6	0 2 0	0 1 6
Flour (6 lb., at 3d. per pound) ...	0 1 6	0 1 0	0 0 6
Vegetables ...	0 3 0	0 3 0	0 0 0
Light beer and stouts (1 dozen pints, at 3d. per pint) ...	0 3 0	0 2 0	0 1 0
Food sundries (fruit, cakes, pickles, &c.) ...	0 5 0	0 4 0	0 1 0
Sundry cooking materials ...	0 1 9	0 1 6	0 0 3
Other sundries ...	0 3 0	0 2 6	0 0 6
Laundry (part done at home) ...	0 5 6	0 5 0	0 0 6
Weekly totals ...	£3 9 5	£2 12 10	£0 14 1

including one small child, and the husband a professional man, whose income had, if anything, decreased as a result of the war.

The cost, like that of the war itself, rose as the months slipped by, and the National Budget of September, 1915, still further increased the impost on sugar and tea, &c., and raised the income-tax all round. That, however, lies outside the scope of the present survey, which ends roughly with the first twelve months of the war. People learned in the hard school of experience to practise economy by a slight lowering of the standard of living. When new-laid eggs, for example, rose to  $3\frac{1}{2}d.$  each most people were content to go without, and grumble less at the monotony of the breakfast rasher.

London's food prices were no worse than those in many other parts of the country. They were better, indeed, than some, though there were variations in different items everywhere. In Manchester it was estimated that by the end of the first year of war the cost of living had risen by some 35 per cent. For many of the poorer classes this inevitably meant a reduction both in the quality and the quantity of the food consumed, but the working-classes as a whole probably felt the increased cost of living less than most people. Wages rose proportionately as labour grew scarcer. Men and women worked day and night in countless numbers in the manufacture of war supplies of every description, earning more money by overtime and largely increased personal effort, as well as by some general rise in the rate of wages, than they had ever earned before.

It was argued in certain quarters that the increase in the cost of living was responsible for much of the unrest in the labour world—stories being circulated that huge fortunes had been made by exploitation of the food of the people—but most of these unhappy difficulties, as the Lord Chancellor said, were more probably due to misunderstanding and the inconceivable difficulty of making masses of men in remote districts realize how much depended on their individual and unceasing efforts.

The less said about the coal strike in South Wales in July, 1915, perhaps, the better. It was the culminating episode in a series of ignoble industrial squabbles in various parts of the kingdom which need only be recalled as instances of the inability of certain sections of the public, even twelve months after the outbreak of the war, to realize the gravity of the situation. Not all the blame was due to the workmen, but the course of the South Wales strike, and the course of other labour troubles up to this period, showed that the extremists of democracy wholly failed to understand how much the issue of the war entailed for European liberty and the future of all that democracy stood for. Let this wretched squabble and its counterparts be buried, as Mr. Lloyd George said after settling the dispute in July, "in the deepest pit in South Wales; flood it if you can; out of sight let it be"; but the moral harm that such unworthy incidents did us at the time among other nations was incalculable. Merthyr Tydvil made the real voice of South Wales heard a few months later by

returning M. C. B. Stanton as an independent and patriotic Labour member to Parliament to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Mr. Keir Hardie. Mr. Stanton had boldly declared war against the anti-recruiting and pacifist policy of the Independent Labour Party, which had been founded by Mr. Keir Hardie, and won

part played by those millions of working men and women who threw their whole energy into the struggle, and understood. "Think of the men in the dockyards and factories who have been working seven days a week and overtime, and who fall asleep whenever they knock off work," said Lord Selborne in one of the committee rooms



Women Workers for the War: Shell-making in one of the Scottish munition works

the day with a majority of 4206 over that party's official candidate. Previously to this, it should be added, the Trades Union Congress, by an almost solid vote, and speaking in the name of nearly 3,000,000 workers of Great Britain, declared its belief in the justice of the Allied cause, and pledged itself to assist the Government to the utmost of its power in the successful prosecution of the war.

The coal strike and its counter-parts had overshadowed the splendid

of the House of Lords in August, 1915. Lord Selborne also paid a tribute to the work of the railwaymen, who, with numbers immensely reduced by their contributions to the army, carried a volume of trade such as had never been carried on our railways before. The strain on these men was very great. As far as possible it was relieved by women labour, which gradually stepped into the breach in every industry throughout the country, and did more for the cause of political



rights for women than all the militancy of the years before the war. A volunteer Women's Police Force was started among other things, and though the members had no legal status, they did their best to make themselves efficient and necessary. Miss Damer Dawson was the chief officer at the headquarters at the Women's Institute in London. To their lasting credit be it recorded that the very women whose lawlessness helped to convince the enemy that Britain was too disturbed with her own affairs to interfere with Germany in 1914, realized the meaning of the conflict at once, and, casting all their propaganda aside, threw themselves heart and soul into the national cause. Their services were acknowledged by the Government in July, 1915, when Mr. Lloyd George received a deputation on the subject. The first thing to do, as the Minister of Munitions pointed out, was to get rid of prejudice—not merely the prejudice of trade unionists, but also the conservatism of business men, who would not be persuaded that women could carry out certain work as well as, if not better, than men. There was also the apprehension of the working man that if women were successful at munition work and the like they would be retained after the war, and men would, in looking for work, feel their competition too keenly. Dealing with this point, Mr. Lloyd George made it clear that the work was war work, and therefore would come to an end when the war was over. A Board of Trade Register had already been instituted for organizing the women of this country as well as the men, but it

was a voluntary affair, and though the circular was received by 13,000,000 women, only 90,000 placed their names on the register. Even so, something like 50,000 women were already working in July at various factories turning out munitions; but



War-time Police: the Chief of the "Women Police Force" in London

measures were now to be taken by the Government in order greatly to enlarge this field of female labour. These were, first of all, the national organization of a sufficient number of women—prepared to give all their time to the kind of work in which they were particularly skilled—upon whom the Government could draw when ready to fill their new establishments; and, secondly,



## The Great World War

means which could be taken immediately for the training of women in the necessary work. The Government had no intention of availing themselves of the services of women merely to get cheap labour. For piece-work it was arranged that women should be paid the same as men, a minimum rate of wages being fixed for time-work. Thus was the national organization begun for seriously drawing on the reserve of women labour to help the country through the crisis created by the wholly unprecedented demands for munitions of war. The women were not only willing but eager to serve their country in this way, desiring, as they said, to make no bargain, apart of course from the proviso that the Government would prevent any sweating. The 50,000 already at work were not more than between one-fifth and one-tenth of the number similarly employed both in France and Germany, where the national organization for supplying the needs of armies on a Continental scale was able to draw upon this female reserve from the first.

In this matter of munitions Britain, in August, 1915, was still struggling twelve months behind to catch a foe who had been preparing for forty years. During the search for scapegoats, after the realization that the disap-



Harrow Boys making Munitions: School instruction at the metal-turning lathe

pointments on our fighting front in France and Flanders in the spring of 1914 had been largely due to a shortage of shells, attacks were made on General von Donop, Master-General of the Ordnance—attacks which need not be referred to here save for Lord Haldane's defence of that distinguished officer in a speech delivered on July 5, 1915, which appeared to throw some striking light on the whole question. As far back as October, 1914, while Lord Haldane was still a member of the Cabinet, he explained, a committee was assembled by the Government, which included Lord Kitchener, Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Churchill, Mr. M'Kenna, and other Cabinet Ministers, and their attention was drawn to the urgent necessity to increase the supply of munitions, due to the changed conditions of modern warfare.

"We consulted General von Donop," continued Lord Haldane, "and afterwards

we summoned the great munition manufacturers and we placed orders with them which they undertook to carry out, and which, if they had been carried out, would have placed this country in a position of tremendous advantage, and we should have had a very large surplus. We placed these orders. The munition manufacturers did their best to execute them. But there arose difficulties between labour and capital which confounded all the calculations of the munition manufacturers, and that is the source of the trouble to-day. It is not General von Donop. The industrial conditions, in face of such a demand, were such that the great munition manufacturers could not complete them, though they did their best."

This put a new complexion on the matter, but Mr. Lloyd George at once took Lord Haldane to task for "the unwisdom of these partial and unauthorized disclosures", issuing a statement through the Press Bureau to the following effect:—

"Lord Haldane's version of what took place some months ago at a Committee of

the Cabinet on arms is incomplete, and in some material respects inaccurate. At the proper time it will be necessary to go more fully into the matter, though Mr. Lloyd George hopes that he will not be driven to do so at this stage. But he would like to point out that the very fact of this conflict of memory having arisen shows the unwisdom of these partial and unauthorized disclosures of the decisions of highly confidential Committees of the Cabinet."

It was not until the end of 1915, when the shortage had been largely overcome, that the nation realized how grave had been the deficiencies in the spring. Mr. Lloyd George then announced that in the month of May, when the Germans were turning out 250,000 shells a day, most of them high explosives, we were turning out a mere 2500 a day in high explosives and 13,000 in shrapnel. The French had been much more successful in the quantities they were turning out, but even their colossal efforts were admittedly inadequate to cope with the

immense reserves and enormous output of the German arsenals. The causes of our own shortage, as now stated by the Minister of Munitions, were of various kinds. The demand had been so sudden, and the energies and thought of the war taxed to the uttermost in so many quarters, that the organization had not grown in proportion to the need. The part



Munition Work in the Villages: Basket-making for Shells at Busbridge, near Godalming, under the direction of the village schoolmaster

which high explosives were to play in the war had not been sufficiently realized, and when realized the orders had not been duly executed by the firms to whom they had been given. "We trusted too much to the old firms without seeking new sources of supply," declared the Minister of Munitions. The result was that the



The War-time Booking-office Clerk at Railway Stations

deliveries at that time—before the new organization had been created—were but 16 per cent of the promises. The deficiencies were found to be largely due to lack of machinery, labour, the ready and steady supply of material, and transport difficulties. Obviously it was high time that the Government came to the conclusion "that it was better, perhaps, seeing that the energies of the War Office were engaged in raising and in feeding and supplying troops, that there should be a separate department which

could concentrate the whole of its mind and energies upon the production of guns, and munitions, and material of war generally".

Happily there was no room for doubt as to the transformation wrought under the Ministry of Munitions during the rest of 1915. Mr. Lloyd George retired from the Chancellorship of the Exchequer in order to assume control of this new department. Within a few months the Ministry's ramifications were all over the United Kingdom, not only speeding up existing contracts everywhere, but also setting up fresh sources of supply. Great Britain was divided into eight areas, and Ireland into two, each area being to a large extent self-supporting. The new sources of supply were two-fold, one being the co-operative and decentralized distribution of work among established manufacturers in particular districts, and the other the establishment of new "national factories" in various parts of the kingdom. Before the end of July, 1915, sixteen of these "national factories" had already been set up, munition volunteers had been enrolled by the thousand—the majority of them skilled men in the engineering and shipbuilding trades—a census had been taken of all the machinery in the kingdom, and for the first time something like the full strength of the industrial world had been organized to cope with the grim struggle ahead.

A further significant step towards the complete mobilization of the nation was taken in August, 1915, when everyone between the ages of fifteen and sixty-five, except those serving



in the navy and army, had to fill up the National Registration form. In the course of six days 25,000,000 forms were distributed and collected by 100,000 enumerators, mostly volunteers, who saw that particulars were filled in stating the age, occupation, and qualification for war work of every

—unmarried men to be preferred before married men, as far as may be."

The value of this register to Lord Derby's recruiting-scheme in the following autumn lies outside the scope of the present survey, but its usefulness was obvious at once in removing



War Work of the Women's Reserve Ambulance Corps: Bringing up the morning's milk supply for the hospital

person, male and female, within the prescribed limit. The primary object of this war census was clearly stated by Lord Kitchener in his speech at the London Guildhall on July 9, to the following effect:—

"When this registration is completed we shall anyhow be able to note the men between the ages of 19 and 40 not required for munition or other necessary industrial work, and therefore available, if physically fit, for the fighting-line. Steps will be taken to approach, with a view to enlistment, all possible candidates for the army

the reproach that the whole conduct of the war hitherto had suffered gravely through what a foreign and friendly critic had described as the prodigious inefficiency of our national organizations. "We shall never know," as Lord Lansdowne said in the House of Lords, "what these defects of national organization must have cost the nation in anxiety, in life, and in the prolongation of the war."

It was necessary to organize our other industries as well as our muni-



tion works. One vital factor that was often lost sight of during the first anxious year of the war was that our national duty and our duty to our Allies was not confined to sending an adequate supply of troops to the various theatres of war, to turning out an inexhaustible supply of munitions, and to maintaining the freedom of the seas. We had also to keep the essential industries going to maintain a world-wide credit, for the additional duty had also been cast upon us of financing to a large extent the whole conduct of the war. Modern warfare is as much a question of economics as of military science.

The great War Loan of July, 1914, with its unprecedented total of practically £600,000,000—afterwards exceeded, but, at the time, far beyond any amount ever raised in the history of the world—represented the mobilization of the capital of the people, rich and poor alike, and demonstrated the unrivalled resources of the British Empire. This loan of £600,000,000, raised from a million subscribers, and made up entirely of new money—not an enormous paper operation like the subsequent German loan announced in Berlin in the following month as having produced £601,500,000—was a declaration to our enemies and Allies alike that the United Kingdom, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer declared at the time in the House of Commons, “would prove faithful to her trust”.

The first British War Loan, raised in November, 1914, was for £350,000,000—over-subscribed—so that the people contributed in the first year, out of available resources, and without the

help of borrowed money, no less than £950,000,000. The nation grew so accustomed to thinking in millions sterling that it was difficult at the time to grasp the full significance of these huge figures.

With the £601,500,000 already referred to, and two earlier loans, Germany had so far been the heaviest borrower of all the belligerents, her three war loans to September, 1915, comparing as follows with Britain's two:—

	Issued at	Rate of In- terest	Total Subscribed
BRITISH			
1st Loan, Nov. 1914	95	3½	£350,000,000
2nd „ July 1915	100	4½	£600,000,000
Total			£950,000,000
GERMAN			
1st Loan, Sept. 1914	97½	5	£219,000,000
2nd „ May, 1915	98½	5	£450,000,000
3rd „ Sept. 1915	99	5	£601,500,000
Total			£1,270,500,000

Austria-Hungary during the same period borrowed to the extent of something like £333,000,000. Of our Allies France had raised £1,200,000,000; Russia some £600,000,000; and Italy £97,000,000; making all told a colossal total, with the loans of smaller States, of not far short of £4,500,000,000 up to September, 1915.

A doubled income-tax and other increased imposts added enormously, of course, to the nation's total contributions to the war. The cost of the conflict had grown by leaps and bounds since our last survey, covering the first six months. Three Votes of Credit had then been passed to the total amount of £362,000,000, to cover the needs of the military situation for

the financial year expiring on March 31, 1915, making a daily average expenditure at that period of £1,500,000. The forecast then made that this expenditure would show a tendency to increase was fully realized.

In the middle of the following September the Prime Minister gave these increasing daily rates as follows:

during the first thirteen months amounted to the phenomenal sum of £1,262,000,000. The general tendency of the expenditure was still upward, the main and most potent cause of that advance, as Mr. Asquith explained at the time, being the growth in our advances to our Allies. Next to that he placed the expanding cost



Women Workers for the Army: Carting hay in the great Forage Reserve Depôt at Richmond, Surrey

From April 1 to June 17, 108 days, £2,900,000: from July 18 to September 11, 56 days, £4,200,000. That was gross. The net average daily expenditure was put at £2,700,000 from April 1 to the end of June; £3,000,000 from July 1 to July 17; and £3,500,000 from July 18 to September 11. With the further Vote of Credit passed on that occasion—the fourth during the financial year up to date and the seventh since the outbreak of war—the total sum voted

of our army, the principal factor in the increase being the expenditure on munitions. For September, 1915, the total army expenditure, including munitions, was estimated at £60,000,000, or £2,000,000 a day. In the case of the navy the expenditure rose steadily to the end of June, but afterwards showed a tendency to decline, the daily rate for September being placed at £600,000. Even this sum was £380,000 in excess of the normal daily expenditure upon the navy and

army combined on a peace footing. Yet the nation, if it grumbled at certain extravagances and hoped for more economy both in public and private life, bore the strain without flinching, determined to vindicate the national honour at all costs.

"It was and is a worthy issue," declared Mr. Asquith in proposing one of these Votes of Credit. "We will continue to stake upon it everything we have—our wealth, our industry, our intelligence, the lives of our children, and the existence of our Empire."

The Relief Funds continued to grow by prodigious leaps. At the end of the first year the Prince of Wales's Fund broke all records with its magnificent total of £5,500,000. The Red Cross Fund was over £1,500,000, and more than £1,000,000 had been raised in this country alone for the relief of Belgium, America and the Colonies helping with equal generosity

in the same cause. Large subscriptions were also raised for Russia, Poland, Serbia, Montenegro, and France, as well as for the Queen's Fund for Women, and many similar funds for the creature comforts of our soldiers and sailors.

By this time the old Liberal Government, under which the war had hitherto been conducted in this country, had given place to a Coalition Ministry, which constituted in many respects the most remarkable Government in our political history—a Government for War, which did away with the Opposition Front Bench and all party criticism, though there remained no lack of irresponsible critics in both Houses of Parliament. The Opposition had stood loyally by the Government since the outbreak of war, or, if fighting at all, fighting with the buttons on the foils, lest in damaging their political opponents they should also



Women's Work in War-time: British farmer sowing wheat while a girl worked the team for harrowing it into the ground

injure the national cause. By the spring of 1915, however, the time had come when a party Government was no longer adequate to the stupendous task in view, fresh developments and disappointing chapters in the history of the war now convincing everyone who had eyes to see that nothing but the united and concentrated effort of the whole nation would suffice to cleave a way to victory. The stay-

ing power of this country was going to be taxed as it never had been taxed before; "and if we are to pull through", said Lord Lansdowne on May 26, in announcing the decision of the Unionist leaders to join forces in a combined administration, "it must not be by the efforts of one party or another portion of it, of one class of the community or another class, but by an effort of the whole of the country, irrespective of classes or areas, or distinctions of any kind". The same considerations forced themselves upon the existing Government, with the result that Mr. Asquith sent the following historic invitation to the leader of the Opposition:—

"DEAR MR. BONAR LAW,

"After long and careful consideration I have definitely come to the conclusion that the conduct of the war to a successful and decisive issue cannot be effectively carried on except by a Cabinet which re-



Women's Work for the War: a girl horse-breaker for the Army Remount Department

presents all parties in the State. I need not enter into the reasons, sufficiently obvious, which point to this as the best solution, in the interests of the country, of the problems which the war now presents; nor does the recognition of its necessity involve any disparagement on my part of the splendid service which in their several spheres my colleagues have rendered to the Empire in this great and trying emergency. My colleagues have placed their resignations in my hands, and I am therefore in a position to invite you and those who are associated with you to join forces with us in a combined administration in which I should also ask the leaders of the Irish and Labour parties to participate; whose common action, without prejudice to the future prosecution of our various and divergent political purposes, should be exclusively directed to the issues of the war."

As soon as that letter was received, Mr. Bonar Law and Lord Lansdowne summoned a meeting of their colleagues, and with their approval Mr. Bonar Law sent the following reply:—



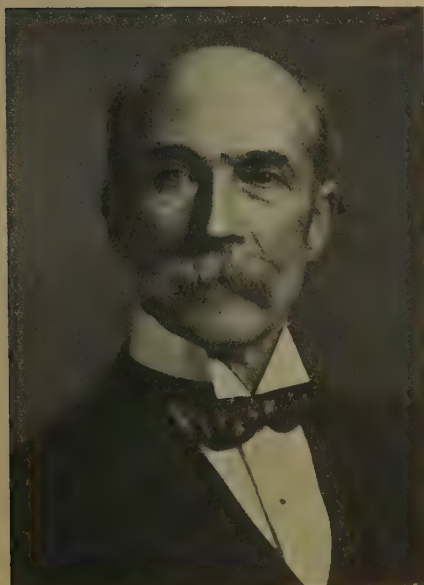
"The considerations to which you refer have for some time been present to the mind of Lord Lansdowne and myself. We have now communicated your views and your invitation to our colleagues, and we shall be glad to co-operate with you in your endeavour to form a National Government."

"What other answer could we have sent?" asked Mr. Bonar Law in subsequently explaining the position to a meeting of the Unionist Party at the Carlton Club. "There was absolutely no alternative." No alternative Government seemed possible without a party election going on throughout the country; and that was then dismissed as unthinkable. Thus the Liberal Cabinet, which had been in uninterrupted power for nine and a half years, met Parliament for the last time on May 19, 1915, both Houses reassembling on June 3 under the Coalition. It was clearly understood on both sides that the reconstruction was for the period of the war only, "and not", in Mr. Asquith's words, "as indicating anything in the nature of a surrender or compromise, by any person or body of persons, of their several political purposes and ideals". Mr. Redmond was offered a seat in the Cabinet, but, while giving the new Government his blessing on behalf of the Irish party, did not see his way to accept a place. The Labour Party was represented by Mr. Arthur Henderson, who became President of the Board of Education, with the understanding that he would assist the Government in regard to labour questions arising out of the war. The new Cabinet consisted of 22 members—the largest of modern times in this

country—superseding a ministry of 20, which comprised 19 Liberals and one non-party member, Lord Kitchener. Eight members of the old Cabinet resigned to make room for the new. Lord Haldane retired from the Woolsack in favour of Sir Stanley Buckmaster, receiving at the same time from His Majesty the Order of Merit, Sir Stanley Buckmaster, the only Liberal addition to the Cabinet—raised from the rank of Solicitor-General—being promoted to the peerage as Lord Buckmaster. This was an uncommonly rapid rise, the new Lord Chancellor having sat but a bare two years on the Treasury Bench. The seven other Liberal Ministers to retire were Lord Beauchamp (Lord President of the Council), Mr. C. E. Hobhouse



The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, Secretary of State  
for the Colonies  
(From a photograph by Bassano)



The Right Hon. Marquess of Lansdowne, Minister without Portfolio in the Coalition Government  
(From a photograph by Elliott & Fry)

(Postmaster - General), Mr. Herbert Samuel (President of the Local Government Board), Mr. J. A. Pease (President of the Board of Education), Mr. Montagu (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster), Lord Lucas (President of the Board of Agriculture), and Lord Emmott (First Commissioner of Works). The new Cabinet, or Government for War, consisted of 12 Liberals, 8 Unionists, 1 Labour member, and Lord Kitchener. The only other Secretary of State who remained in the same office, in addition to Lord Kitchener—still, of course, Secretary of State for War—was Sir Edward Grey, who continued his work at the Foreign Office, where he now had the valuable assistance of Lord Lansdowne. In

the shuffling of the seats Mr. Winston Churchill resigned as First Lord of the Admiralty in favour of Mr. Balfour, retaining a place in the Cabinet, for the time being, as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. Mr. Lloyd George vacated the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer for the new post of Minister of Munitions, and was succeeded by Mr. M'Kenna, who first made his mark as Financial Secretary. Mr. M'Kenna was succeeded in turn at the Home Office by Sir John Simon, while two other Secretaries of State made way for Unionists, Mr. Bonar Law succeeding Mr. L. V. Harcourt as Colonial Secretary, and Mr. Austen Chamberlain Lord Crewe, as Secretary for India. Both Mr. Harcourt and Lord Crewe, however, retained places in the Cabinet, the first resuming his old seat as First Commissioner of Works, and the second accepting the nominal post of Lord President of the Council. Two Unionist peers also joined the Coalition Ministry without accepting departmental duties, Lord Lansdowne reviving an old custom by entering as Minister without Portfolio, and Lord Curzon becoming Lord Privy Seal. The chief Law officers were both Unionists, Sir Edward Carson acting as Attorney-General—until he quarrelled with his colleagues over the Balkan crisis a few months later, and retired—and Sir F. E. Smith as Solicitor - General. The complete Coalition Ministry thus formed in the spring of 1915 to carry the war to a successful issue was as follows, the figures in brackets indicating the salaries attached to each office:—

## THE COALITION GOVERNMENT

## THE CABINET

Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (£5000)	H. H. Asquith.
Lord Chancellor (£10,000) ... ..	Lord Buckmaster.
Lord President of the Council (£2000) ... ..	Lord Crewe.
Lord Privy Seal (£2000) ... ..	Lord Curzon.
First Lord of the Admiralty (£4500) ... ..	A. J. Balfour.
Minister without Portfolio ... ..	Lord Lansdowne.

*Secretaries of State:*

Home Affairs (£5000) ... ..	Sir John Simon.
Foreign Affairs (£5000) ... ..	Sir Edward Grey.
Colonies (£5000) ... ..	A. Bonar Law.
India (£5000) ... ..	Austen Chamberlain.
War (£5000) ... ..	Earl Kitchener.

Chancellor of the Exchequer (£5000) ... ..	Reginald M'Kenna.
Minister of Munitions (£5000) ... ..	D. Lloyd-George.
Secretary for Scotland (£2000) ... ..	T. M'Kinnon Wood.
Chief Sec. to the Lord-Lieut. of Ireland (£4425) ... ..	Augustine Birrell.
President of the Board of Trade (£5000) ... ..	Walter Runciman.
President of the Local Government Board (£5000) ... ..	Walter Long.
President of the Board of Agriculture (£2000) ... ..	Earl of Selborne.
President of the Board of Education (£2000) ... ..	Arthur Henderson.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (£2000) ... ..	Winston Churchill.
First Commissioner of Works (£2000) ... ..	Lewis Harcourt.
Attorney-General (£7000 and fees) ... ..	Sir Edward Carson.

## NOT IN THE CABINET

*Parliamentary Under-Secretaries:*

Home Office (£1500) ... ..	W. Brace.
Foreign Office (£1500) ... ..	Lord Robert Cecil.
Colonial Office (£1500) ... ..	A. Steel-Maitland.
India Office (£1500) ... ..	Lord Islington.
Board of Trade (£1200) ... ..	Captain Pretymann.
Local Government Board (£1000) ... ..	W. Hayes Fisher.
Board of Education (£1200) ... ..	J. H. Lewis.
War Office (£1500) ... ..	H. J. Tennant.
Parliamentary Secretary Board of Agriculture (£1200) ... ..	F. D. Acland.
Financial Secretary to the Treasury (£2000) ... ..	Hon. Edwin S. Montagu.
Chief Whips ... ..	J. W. Gulland and Lord Edmund Talbot.
Junior Lords of the Treasury (each £1000) ... ..	{ G. H. Roberts, W. R. Rea, W. C. Bridge-
	{ man, Hon. H. Howard.
Postmaster-General (£2500) ... ..	Herbert Samuel.
Paymaster-General (unpaid) ... ..	Lord Newton.
Solicitor-General (£6000 and fees) ... ..	Sir F. E. Smith, K.C.
Lord Advocate, Scotland (£5000) ... ..	R. Munro, K.C.
Solicitor-General, Scotland (£2000) ... ..	T. B. Morison, K.C.
Lord-Lieutenant, Ireland (£20,000) ... ..	Lord Wimborne.
Lord Chancellor, Ireland (£8000) ... ..	Ignatius O'Brien, K.C.
Attorney-General, Ireland (£5000) ... ..	John Gordon, K.C.
Solicitor-General, Ireland (£2000) ... ..	James O'Connor, K.C.

Mr. Balfour's appointment to the Admiralty involved the resignation of Lord Fisher as First Sea Lord, as well as that of Mr. Winston Churchill,

Lord Fisher, as stated in an earlier chapter of the work, being succeeded by Admiral Sir H. Jackson. One of the first steps taken by Mr. Balfour in his new rôle was to inaugurate the Inventions Board to assist the Admiralty in co-ordinating and encouraging scientific effort in relation to the requirements of the naval service, with a Central Committee consisting of Lord Fisher as president, Sir J. J. Thomson, Sir C. A. Parsons, and Mr. G. T. Beilby, and a consulting panel including many of the most distinguished men in the various branches of science and engineering to which they belonged.

The new Government was little more than two months old when the first anniversary of the war came round, and it did not escape the criticism to which all Coalition Ministries are liable; but it did succeed in removing the last trace of party difference and in presenting a solid front to the world as a national Government united in purpose and sacrificing all other ends to the one object of finishing the war successfully. The new measures adopted for men, money, and munitions were the first fruits of the new regime, which also proceeded to justify itself in a tightening of the grip on the alien population; a stricter control of the drink traffic, especially in munition areas; the formation of a powerful committee of experts, under Lord Milner, on the National Food Supply; and such war schemes as the State Air-craft Insurance, with one rate for the whole country. This national measure was introduced in the House of Commons in July 14, with the following annual rates:—

	Against Air-craft only. Per £100.	Against Air-craft and Bombard- ment. Per £100.
1.—Building, rent, and contents of private dwelling-houses and buildings in which no trade or manufacture is carried on ...	2s. od.	3s. od.
2.—All other buildings and their rents ...	3s. od.	4s. 6d.
3.—Farming stocks (alive and dead) ...	3s. od.	4s. 6d.
4.—Contents of all buildings other than 1 and 5 ...	5s. od.	7s. od.
5.—(a) Merchandise at docks and public wharves, in carriers' and canal warehouses and yards, in public mercantile storage warehouses, and in transit by rail ...	7s. 6d.	10s. od.
(b) Timber in the open	7s. 6d.	10s. od.
(c) Mineral oil tanks and stores (wholesale) ...	7s. 6d.	10s. od.

Insurance under Clause 5 could be accepted for short periods at reduced rates.

It pleased the enemy, for the most part, to rejoice over the change of Government in this country as "another sign of Britain's hopeless confusion", just as it pleased them to believe such pleasant lies as the fable that London was shivering with fear of the Zeppelins. One German publicist, Maximilian Harden, did not mistake the signs of the times. "England", he wrote at this time, "is awakening, and will not sleep again, save in death"—or, to quote the words of Sir Edward Grey in an anniversary message to France, "until she has carried on the struggle to a victory for liberty which would result in an honourable and durable peace."

F. A. M



## CHAPTER II

## THE PARTITIONS OF POLAND

Poland's Helplessness in the Eighteenth Century—Extent, Population, and Geographical Position of Ancient Poland—Great Poland—Catherine of Russia and Frederick of Prussia—Austria's Attitude—The Emperor Francis—Stanislaus of Poland and the Partition of 1772—New Partition of 1793—Futile Effort of Poland to regain Independence, 1793-5—Effort of Alexander of Russia to help Poland—The Settlements of 1814 and of 1863.

THAT growth of nationalities which distinguishes the nineteenth century in the history of Europe, and is the cause of righteousness in the twentieth, has been arrested and suppressed in Poland for more than a hundred years. It has been one of the anomalies of the Great War that the three nations who connived at the destruction of Polish nationality, in order that they might share in the partition of the Polish kingdom, should each declare, though with differing degrees of sincerity, their intention to restore to that unhappy people some

portion at least of what was stolen and destroyed. The ruin of Poland was conceived in Prussia, it was executed by Russia, it was acquiesced in by Austria, whose only qualms arose from doubt as to her share of the spoil. No palliation can be alleged for what was done; the sole excuse for it was Poland's helplessness, and no one of the plunderers could claim that what she took was taken under any guise but that of loot. Loot as a term might perhaps imply that the stolen territories of Poland were the prize of military operations which according to the



The Track of the German Legions, 1915: Polish farmhouse destroyed by the enemy's shell-fire during the pursuit of the retreating Russians

logic of assailants, then and now, had become necessary; but that would not be true, for Poland could not fight. Nor could it be averred that this or that part of Poland was a necessity for the military defences of the kingdoms which stole them. The best evidence of that is that if Poland had possessed the capacity to become a strong buffer State, she could have kept the three aggressors from each other's throats.

The characteristic of Poland which led to her undoing in the eighteenth century was that she had no capacity for becoming a strong State; she was something less than a cohering mass.

"The historical Poland in 1770", says Lord Eversley,<sup>1</sup> "was a vast country extending from the Baltic almost to the Black Sea, and lying between Russia and Germany, with an area of about 280,000 square miles and a population roughly estimated at eleven and a half millions. It stood third in the list of European countries as regards its extent, and fifth as regards its population. But two-thirds of this vast area were inhabited not by Poles but by other races, Slavs and Germans, and the actual number of people of Polish race was probably not more than seven millions."

To the north was empty Lithuania, to the south-east the Ukraine and Volhynia, which were also Slav; in the north-west was West Prussia, chiefly German in population. If these territories were subtracted there remained a kernel of distinctive Poland about 80,000 square miles in extent. This true Poland, Polish in people, thought, and language, includes what is called Great Poland, and in addition the Prussian province of Posen, about a half of West Prussia and one-third of

Silesia, and about one-half of Galicia, with Cracow as its capital. The population has grown from 7,000,000 in the eighteenth century to 20,000,000 now.

The reason for Poland's partition was that her helplessness made her a prey which no robber could resist.



A Hero's Grave in Poland

The figure is that of a Russian Red Cross nurse.

At the end of the eighteenth century she was a country of Junkers without organization, without a King who could control the Junkers, and with a Parliament or Diet which controlled nothing. At the moment when the warnings which some of Poland's elective kings had uttered were beginning to sink into the minds of those of her leading men who had the wit

<sup>1</sup> *The Partitions of Poland*, by Lord Eversley. 1915.

to look about them, and when an effort was being made to remedy the defects of the Polish constitution, it was Poland's bad fortune that the sovereigns of two neighbouring States were people of overweening ambition, exceptional vigour, and an entire absence of scruple. Catherine II was Empress of Russia, Frederick the Great was King of Prussia. The responsibility of these two for tearing Poland to pieces is to be apportioned according to their ability to obtain the largest share they could. Austria was in slightly different case. She had no wish for Poland's dismemberment, preferring that it should remain a buffer State; but if it had to take place, she would insist on having a share of the plunder. At the time of the first partition the Empress Maria Theresa, who hated Catherine, was on the throne, and it was certainly against her will that she took part in the dismemberment. Her grandson, Francis, who was Emperor during the second and third dismemberments, went much further to meet his two rival conspirators, and it was his fault, not his inclination, which gave him less than they were able to take.

These successive partitions form a chapter of history which is of the highest interest in elucidating the unchanging attitude of Prussia to her weaker neighbours and her temporary allies. It is, however, not otherwise relevant to a history of the present conflict, and no more can be done than to indicate the geographical details of the partitions which were effected by the strong robber hand of Catherine—the lion of the piece—by the treachery

of Frederick—the wolf—and the co-operation of Francis of Austria—the jackal.

The first partition took place in 1772, the way having been paved for it by the election to the throne of Poland of Count Stanislaus Poniatowski, a lover of Catherine's. The scheme of partition was that of Frederick, but the first step was the occupation of Poland first by Russian troops and subsequently by Austrian and Prussian troops, the excuses being flimsy but not to be resisted. Russia took the Palatinates of Polock, Witesk, and Mscislaw, as far as the Rivers Dwina and Dnieper, next to her frontier, and consisting of 3000 square leagues. Austria had a part of Galicia and a portion of Podolia and Little Poland as far as the Vistula, about 2500 square leagues. Prussia (giving way about the towns of Danzig and Thorn) took Polish Prussia. "It was an example of strong Powers conspiring to plunder a feeble Power," says Lecky, "with no more regard for honour or honesty, or the mere decency of appearances, than is shown by a burglar or a footpad." What remained of Poland was guaranteed in its integrity by the predatory Powers.

But their appetite was whetted by their meal. On January 23, 1793, a new treaty was signed for the partition of rather less than half of the then existing territory of Poland. Russia obtained the Palatinates of Kiev, Minsk and Bracslaw, and the greater part of Volhynia. The share of Prussia included the coveted towns of Danzig and Thorn, and the districts of Posen, Kalisch, and Plock. There remained







# POLAND

1815-1914

English Miles 0 50 100 150

- Poland as constituted in 1815
- Poland before partition of 1772







a residue equal to about half what Russia had swallowed. It was to be nominally independent. At best it was a vassal of Russia. Austria, with Francis, a greedy but incapable haggler, to look after her interests, was consoled with a promise of help in exchanging Bavaria for Belgium.

The part of Poland still nominally intact was some two-fifths of the extent of Poland before partition. It

Napoleon in 1814, the Congress of Vienna reconsidered the position of Poland; and, strangely enough, the claim of the Poles for reconstitution as a nation was urged by the Emperor Alexander of Russia. He attempted to reconstitute Poland, but his efforts were not well received by the other nations, and Metternich's scheme, which was eventually adopted, was a new partition. Alexander's inten-



Photo, Underwood & Underwood

A Red Cross Victim of the German Artillery: Russian hospital ship—presented by a Polish nobleman—after its destruction by shell-fire on the river Vistula

consisted of what is still known as Great Poland, the whole of Lithuania, and parts of Galicia and Podolia. This fragment of a great kingdom was divided up between the three neighbouring Powers within the next two years, after a futile attempt of the Poles to regain their independence. In 1795 Russia took all the Polish territory between the Rivers Vistula, Bug, and Pilitza; Austria was to have the four southern Palatinates of Cracow, Sandomir, Lublin, and part of Cholm; Prussia might have the Duchy of Warsaw and the rest.

Finally, after the abdication of

tions were in great part set aside. Galicia was restored to Austria, with the exception of Cracow, which was constituted an independent republic. The Polish province of Posen, together with Danzig and Thorn, were given again to Prussia. The residue of the Grand-Duchy of Warsaw was placed under the suzerainty of Russia, with a promise of autonomy. Russia also retained Lithuania and the other Slav provinces of the old kingdom of Poland. In 1863 any good intentions towards Poland vanished in the suppression by Prussia and Russia of a Polish insurrection.

E. S. G.





After the Fall of Warsaw, August 4, 1915: German troops bringing in Russian prisoners captured during the retreat

## CHAPTER III

### THE GREAT RUSSIAN RETREAT

(August–September, 1915)

Strategical Significance of the Loss of Warsaw--The Line of the Vistula--German Plan of driving a Wedge between the Russian Armies--Respective Rôles of Hindenburg and Mackensen in the North and of Von Linsingen and Pflanzer in Galicia--The Fall of Kovno--Its Consequences--Premature Loss of Novo Georgievsk--Russian Losses and German Gains--The Tsar takes Command of his Armies, the Grand Duke Nicholas going to the Caucasus--Lord Kitchener's Prophecy: "The Germans will have shot their bolt"--The Vilna Salient--Successful Russian Withdrawal--The Sum of the German Efforts--General Ivanoff in Galicia on the Strypa Line.

WITH the fall of Warsaw, on August 4, 1915, the campaign in Russian Poland and Galicia entered on a new phase, and one which was less favourable to our Allies. The loss of Warsaw was, from a military point of view, immeasurably more important than the loss of Przemyśl or Lemberg, or the hundreds of square miles in Galicia which had to be written off as losses of territory, and politically its effect in representing the achievement of a German aim which had long been

declared, and sought without intermission for many months, was equally great. It is not too much to say that this event sealed the policy of more than one Balkan State. It was followed next day by the fall of the fortress of Ivangorod (August 5), and though within three days an event took place on this front which was destined to have a considerable effect on the complete realization of the German aims, it passed unnoticed in the greater upheaval of which the abandonment of the Vistula fortresses was the sign. The little-noticed event was the first of the naval repulses inflicted on the Germans in the Gulf of Riga.

The operations in the Gulf of Riga are treated elsewhere from the naval point of view. It is sufficient to note here that the German naval repulse destroyed their military project of an outflanking manœuvre, which with

Riga as a base, should drive the Russians across the Dvina and imperil the position of their northern army in Courland. Had that intention been carried out, the threat to the integrity of the Russian army groups might have been pushed to a point where it would have culminated in a disaster to them impossible to repair. It was not carried out, and that overwhelming disaster which might have taken the form of capturing or cutting off a whole Russian army group, and have so reached what might reasonably have been called a "decision" in this field of warfare, was averted. When winter came the "decision" so fiercely sought by the Germans still evaded them. But between August 4 and 5 and November, when, in a prophetic phrase employed by Lord Kitchener, the Germans had "shot their bolt", there were many perilous moments,



The Retreat from Warsaw, August, 1915: Russian artillery on the road

when the Russian immunity from envelopment was purchased only at the price of severe losses. The loss of the Vistula line, which was implied in the fall of Warsaw and the fortress of Ivangorod, and was postponed only formally till the fall of the fortress of Novo Georgievsk completed the abandonment of the eastern apex of the "Polish triangle", was the most severe loss.

The River Vistula is the most formidable military obstacle in Europe; no considerable Russian offensive could be conducted to the west of it unless the railway bridges at Warsaw were in Russian hands. The unique strategic value of Warsaw was that it was the bridge-head, and the only *railway* bridge-head (except a light bridge at Ivangorod) over the Vistula. The abandonment would result in giving the Germans the obstacle of the Vistula as an asset on their side, and if they had chosen to halt there they could have held their line with a very much smaller number of troops than they had hitherto been forced to employ on this front, releasing them for other purposes. It is, however, one of the maxims of the higher German strategy to push a victory to its utmost limits, and the army groups of Hindenburg and Mackensen co-operated in the effort to derive from the new situation a military profit which would repay them by a complete reduction of the Russian resistance. The greatest share of the effort fell on the Hindenburg group of armies, between Warsaw and Riga; but the preliminary strategic idea was one which this group joined with that

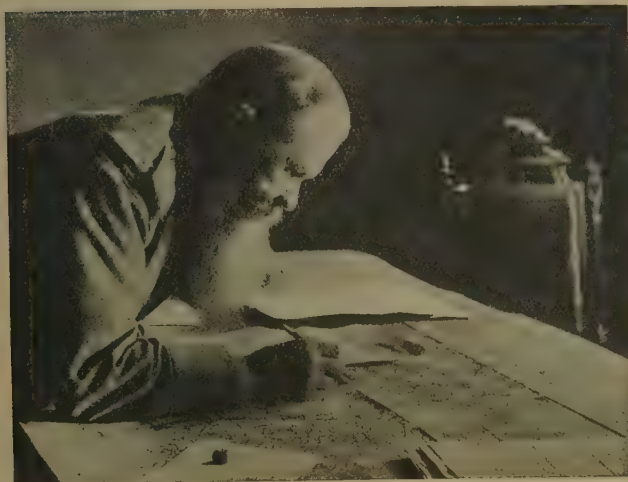
of Prince Leopold's army opposite Warsaw and with that of the main southern army group of Mackensen to execute.

A line drawn inclining very slightly to the north-east will run from Warsaw along the Narew to the fortress of Ossowiecs, thence to the strong fortress of Kovno on the Niemen, and so on to the River Aa and Riga. The main railway line from Warsaw to Petrograd makes a slight angle with this imaginary line, and runs almost north-east through Bielostok, the fortress of Grodno (on the Niemen) and Vilna. The chief aim of the Von Hindenburg group was to get from the Warsaw-Riga imaginary line, which, roughly, they occupied in the first week of September, to the main



General von Linsingen, commanding one of the German armies attacking the southern Russian group under General Ivanoff





General Ivanoff, commanding the Southern Russian Group in the Great Retreat

railway line. At the end of their effort, two and a half months later, they had succeeded in doing so along the more southerly portion of the angle, having taken Ossowiecs and Kovno, the fortresses, and occupied Bielostok, Grodno, and Vilna on the railway line.

That was a fractional part, though a very important part, of the German plan, which had for its first aim the separation of the Russian armies into two disconnected groups. So separated they could be dealt with in turn and broken into smaller fragments. Up to a certain point this plan was successful, and the beginning of success was when, on July 29, Mackensen had broken through the Russian line on the Lublin-Cholm railway, compelling the Russians to evacuate Lublin two days later. From that date onward the Russian armies of the north were separated from those of the south, and each further advance of

the Germans tended to make the separation more marked. When the Germans reached the line which may be called the "farthest east" of their advance, Mackensen's main southern army had pushed up towards the great natural obstacle of the Pripet marsh country, and its interposition cut the direct railway communication between Warsaw and the south.

That left the northern

Russian armies dependent, one on the railway line to Petrograd, and the other, retreating eastwards from the abandoned Warsaw salient, dependent on the railway line from Warsaw to Moscow. The third group of Russian armies, south of the Pripet Marshes and in Galicia, was ultimately dependent on the railway-line to Kiev and Odessa.

Having thus separated the groups, the Germans elected to hold the southern Russian group, under General Ivanoff, by the forces of Generals von Linsingen and Pflanzer, attacking them continually but not in overwhelming force, while they endeavoured to batter the northern group with all the men, guns, and energy at their command. This endeavour, as it developed, showed that the weight of the blow was not to be delivered at the most northerly part of the Russian line, in Courland and in the neighbourhood of Riga, though the threat



of action there was always present, but towards the middle of the northern group line. The most northerly point of this section of attack was the fortress of Kovno, held strongly by the Russians. The more southerly region of it was that of the Narew, which the Russians could no longer hold and from which they were retiring. Their retirement pivoted on the fortress of Novo Georgievsk, which was depended on to hold up the Germans at the southern extremity of this section, as Kovno was expected to delay them at the northern extremity. Both fortresses fulfilled part of the duty assigned to them, and the eastward retirement of the Russians from this awkward line was made successfully and with some degree of leisure.

But neither fortress appears to have held out as long as it was expected to do; and the consequence of their premature fall was that the Russians had to pay a high price for the withdrawal of their armies without disaster to their main bodies. At the same time they made the Germans pay a high price both for Kovno, and for what the German Head-quarters *communiqué* described on August 10 as "breaking the Russian front on the Narew". The task of forcing the Russians back from the Narew front

—after the Russians had decided that eventually it must be abandoned—took Von Hindenburg three weeks. The reduction of the fortress of Kovno, which fell on August 17, occupied a fortnight, and was effected only by heavy German sacrifice. Kovno was difficult of approach for the Germans, because, while it commanded a



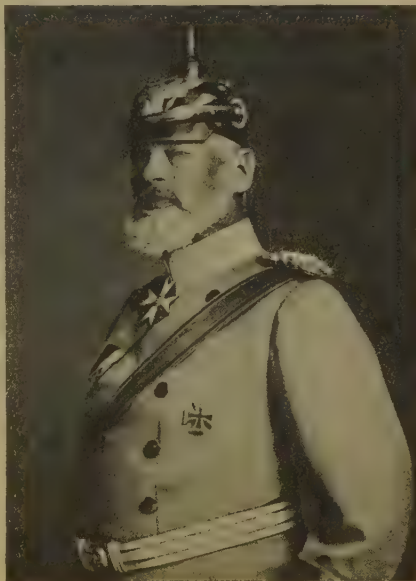
The Fall of Kovno, August 17, 1915: View showing the Cathedral bridge across the Niemen

bend of the Niemen, there was only one good metalled road by which an enemy attacking it from the west could bring up munitions. The Russians had had plenty of time to put its defences into condition, and in the early stages of the German attack it seemed as if their resistance might prove enduring. An attack made on August 8, though it was supported by the heavy German siege-artillery—the famous 16-inch mortars, according to the Russian account, being employed

—was thrice repulsed. A mass attack, lasting from three o'clock to five o'clock in the morning, failed and was succeeded at dusk by another for which the heaviest artillery preparation had been made and had continued throughout the whole of the day. This, too, was repulsed, a few trenches gained by the Germans were retaken, and the assault brought the assailants no nearer to the inner defences than the village of Piple, 5 miles away. But day after day the Germans renewed the attack, and by Sunday the 15th one could read between the lines of the Russian announcement, that the fighting at Kovno had become "of the most desperate character", an intimation that resistance was approaching the breaking-point. Two days later, "after battles lasting eleven days" and costing the Germans formidable losses, Kovno fell. The Germans admitted its stubborn resistance. They were consoled by the capture of 400 guns, quantities of war material, and prisoners, the numbers of which they estimated variously. Between 5000 and 6000 was their provisional estimate, and they afterwards increased it. But whatever the numbers of prisoners and guns they captured, and whatever price they paid, the fall of Kovno was a very grave matter for the Russians. It precipitated their retreat, which, if it never became a rout, and never developed a breakage, could no longer by any stretch of the word's meaning be described as a mere retirement. What the Russians felt about Kovno may be gauged by the fact that its commander was tried by a military

court in the following November and was sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment.

Kovno was of strategical importance. It was the main stronghold on the River Niemen, and when its resistance was broken no natural obstacle intervened between the enemy press-



Prince Leopold of Bavaria, commanding one of the German armies in the advance eastwards

ing eastwards and the main line of railway. The Russians signified without concealment their apprehension of the results which would follow on its fall by removing the civil population from Vilna and all the machinery from the manufacturing town of Bielostok. Preparations were made in case Dvinsk, farther north and not far south-eastwards of Riga, should also have to be abandoned. But Novo Georgievsk was a different matter.

It had been deliberately "left behind" in the Russian retirement, and, though no unimpeachable information is available as to the numbers of its garrison or the amount of its ammunition, it is certain that the Russians made no attempt to clear it as Ivan-gorod had been cleared, or as Warsaw had been emptied even of its church bells. A number of heavy guns were left there, and a garrison of trained men, and, so far as the Russian intention can be divined, Novo Georgievsk should have denied the free use of the Vistula to the Germans for a number of weeks. If it could have done so, the Russian door swinging back on the Riga hinge to the Pripet Marshes might have yielded to the German thrust even more obstinately than in Galicia. But it held out only a fortnight. The German claim that they had battered it down by triumphant assault, which in its last stages captured 20,000 of its garrison, is subject to discount, and it is not at all clear what was meant by the curious German Head-quarters comment that the full garrison of Novo Georgievsk was 90,000 men with six generals, unless it was intended to convey the false impression that this was the sum of their captures. But, when all deductions are made from the German claims, Novo Georgievsk was a heavy loss in men, munitions, and heavy guns. Their loss was not repaid either by German loss of men in taking them or by gain of time to the Russians. It seems clear that a miscalculation was made. The consequences, coupled with that of the fall of Kovno, were that the Russian line

fell back with some approach to precipitation, that as the outcome of this haste another dangerous salient was afterwards created opposite Kovno—to be known as the Vilna salient—and that during the next few weeks the Russian fortunes seemed to sink to a lower ebb than at any time in the campaign.

Berlin rang its bells for Kovno and Novo Georgievsk, and was better justified than on some previous occasions. Hindenburg's and Mackensen's armies pressed the advantage to its utmost. The Russians south of Kovno, and between there and Bielostok, began to retreat eastwards with the Germans treading on their heels. Ossowiec, the gallant little stronghold among the marshes of the Bobr, was captured by the Germans whom it had defied so long; the Niemen and the Bobr line went with it. The Russian dam between Ossowiec and Brest-Litovsk the fourth great fortress of the Polish quadrilateral was giving way; the Germans were pouring through it at half a dozen leaks. Hindenburg's troops under Von Scholz crossed the eastern bend of the Narew near Tyockin on August 24; Von Gallwitz crossed it farther south. Bielostok could no longer be held, for Bielsk, on the railway line between it and Brest-Litovsk, was now also in German hands, and Von Mackensen was furiously assailing the fortress itself. On August 25 Brest-Litovsk, the last big Polish fortress, and the northern guardian of the Pripet Marshes, fell, and all resistance within the area of the Warsaw salient was at an end. The only questions

remaining to be answered were how far would the Germans be able to push the Russian line back before their own impetus was exhausted, and to what extent could they exact a toll of disaster from them.

The answers both favourable and unfavourable to our Allies were not

been stormed. The days left to Grodno itself and to Vilna could be counted; those of the main line of railway from Warsaw to Vilna and of the major and minor railways of the Warsaw zone were numbered already. Against these grievous losses, made light of by optimistic writers in Eng-



Between the Opposing Armies: the Fate of a Polish Village

yet to be given. For some time the daily bulletins of the northern disorder recorded German progress which in point of speed was in marked contrast to the halting advance of a few weeks earlier, and which swallowed up one strategic point after another. Mac-kensen's momentum carried him past Brest-Litovsk as far east as Kobrin. By the end of the month of August Błelostok, on the railway, had gone; Lipsk, on the River Bobr, 20 miles from the stronghold of Grodno, had

land but felt very keenly in Russia, there was to be set this fact—that the integrity of the Russian armies had been maintained. Attrition had not broken them, and, so far as their spirit went, they presented the characteristic traditions of Britain, but shared by Russia, of not knowing that they had been beaten. They had remained "armies in being" even under the severe shock of the absence of the respite which Kovno and Novo Georgievsk should have given them;



and though in September they had yet to suffer from the consequences of that failure, yet they were destined to emerge from the highest trial of the campaign with something approaching triumph.

In another war, of a very different character from this, the British forces took Bloemfontein and Pretoria, but found themselves still confronted with the lengthy task of subduing a scattered but persistent enemy. The end in that case was inevitable though it was long in coming, because the supplies of the Boers and their numbers were bound to fail. But in the German campaign against Russia the Germans had not unlimited time to spare. Time would merely repair the Russian strength; it was essential to Germany to break it beyond repair. The time remaining in 1915 before the autumn rains was very short for any such decisive result. At the beginning of September it might be put at six weeks, or eight weeks at most. Consequently, in the early part of September, with the advantages that had been recorded in hand, the Germans pushed their effort to the utmost. On September 1 they reached the outer defences of Grodno, and next day stormed it, though the small number of prisoners they took is an evidence that the Russians made no strong resistance but began to retreat when the outer forts collapsed. Farther north they offered more determined resistance between Grodno and Vilna at Orany, which is on the railway line, but the fact was only significant that the whole line between Warsaw and Vilna was now gone.

In order to prevent reinforcements being moved down, Von Bülow renewed his attacks in the Riga district and stormed the bridge-head at Friedrichstadt on the Dvina.

At this, almost the blackest moment in Russian affairs, a change was announced in the leadership of the Russian armies which took most English people by surprise. The Grand Duke Nicholas, who had been compared a year before by Mr. Balfour<sup>1</sup> to the Prince Eugène of Marlborough's campaigns, was transferred to the command in the Caucasus, and the Tsar, with General Alexieff as Chief of Staff, assumed supreme command of the Russian armies. The English censorship, which deprived us of any material for speculation as to the reasons for the change, naturally objected to any theorizing on the subject, so that the only comment which seemed apposite at the time was that the Tsar's assumption of command removed all doubt as to Russia's intentions to stand by her allies, to make no separate peace with the Germans whatever pressure, military or political, was brought to bear, and, in short, to fight it out to the end.

The days immediately following the announcement of the Tsar's decision brought little improvement in the northern situation, though victory in Galicia, to which fuller reference will be made, was significant that the German eggs were all being put into one basket. They were now fighting east of Grodno, and, despite a vicious counter-attack of the Russians at Skidel, were beginning to thrust their

<sup>1</sup> Speech at the Guildhall Banquet, November 9, 1914.



Drawn by A. C. Michael

The Changes in the Russian Command, September, 1915: the Grand Duke Nicholas, appointed Viceroy of the Caucasus and Commander-in-Chief of the Caucasian Army, pointing out positions to the Tsar, the new supreme Commander of the Russian Army and Navy

forces into such positions north and south of the Vilna railway junction as to create a new salient, in which, as in previous loops, they hoped to lasso some considerable portion of the Russian forces. On paper their chances of doing so seemed more favourable than at any previous juncture in this summer and autumn campaign, because the Russian retreating units were in a state of disorder which was consequent on the events that have been described, and there was no part of their line from which reinforcements could profitably be drawn to help any other. The Germans, on September 7, were almost within striking distance of Vilna, at Novo Troiki; farther south, they took Volkovysk, which is east of Grodno, and is the junction of the railway lines from Grodno and Bielostok; and a few days later they repaired their check at Skidel by capturing the town. They had now the essential railway communications south of Vilna, and the main roads; and they had cut the railway north of Vilna, between Vilna and Dvinsk, at Svientsiany. They followed this up by a concentration of large forces on this section north of Vilna, and laid the foundations of their attempt to encircle Vilna and the forces still holding the railway line there. That was on September 13. On the 12th Lord Kitchener, in a review of the military situation, declared to the House of Lords that in his belief the Germans would prove before the end of the next month to have "shot their bolt". It was a prediction which caused a good deal of surprise in England, and in Berlin it was received

with derision; but events proved that Lord Kitchener was a prophet whose insight was founded on a right appreciation of the weakening effect of the German strivings.

The Germans had failed to advance quickly enough to capture any considerable number of Russians retreating from Grodno. The prospect of capturing those who might be forced to retreat from Vilna represented their last chance, and they accelerated their movements to the utmost to seize it. The taking of Novo Troiki, a few miles east of Vilna, and Orany, more to the south-east, represented the frontal grip on the salient; the seizure of Skidel after the heavy fighting for it and the subsequent advance eastwards of that place formed the southern prong of the pincers; the massing of troops in the line between Dvinsk and Vilna were precedent to the application of the northern prong. On Monday the 13th the capture by the Germans of Podbrozie and Novo Svenziany on the railway line north of Vilna must have convinced the Russian command that the moment for the complete evacuation of Vilna had arrived. Stores, material, and machinery had been removed long before: the problem was the removal of the main body of troops from the entrance of the salient. But while this removal was in progress a new menace was developing in the north. Masses of German and Austrian cavalry began, on September 15, to pour over the region of Svenziany, and beyond, to Widzy. It has been estimated that their numbers were about 40,000 and that they were accompanied by 140 guns.



They swarmed all over the region which lies in the triangle formed by the two railways, one of which goes northward from Vilna to Dvinsk and the other eastwards from Vilna to Minsk. It was the last-named which they



By courtesy of Illustrated London News

Taking the Enemy's Range with a Hyposcope: a masked Russian officer at his trench-post

stretch of line like the curve of a prostrate  $\square$ . This curve had been forced at various points, and fighting was going on all along it. If the Germans had been able to fling a line of permanent strength—horse, foot, artillery—along that curved line, then the retreat of the Russians eastwards along the stem of the  $\square$  would have been doomed, for the railway to Minsk, one of the two essential lines of the Russian retreat, would have been decisively cut and held. But cavalry, though it can cut and harass communications, cannot maintain itself solidly against large bodies of infantry; it cannot attack and defeat them.

This cavalry raid, imposing as it was on paper, and daring as it was in conception, failed of its effect. It got as far as Voriany, which is between the curve and stem of the  $\square$ , and threatened Smorgen and Moldeczno Junction on the stem itself, but it never got near enough to Moldeczno to close the gap here; and meanwhile the great body of the Russian troops were steadily retreating, not along the railway line but along the great main road to Minsk, which lies south of the railway and forms an acute angle with it at Vilna. Thus the northern prong of the pincers, of which the Germans had sought to make a long arm, proved too weak for its purpose. The southern prong, which was of stronger stuff, could not move its men fast enough. They forced their way past Skidel to Mosty, and though they were only a day's march from Lida, another junction which would have proved a danger-point to the Russian retreat, they could not fight their way across

aimed to get astride, and by Friday the 17th they had arrived at Vileika on the Vilia, just to the north of the railway junction Moldeczno. The Russians before and during the raid had been lined up along the line of the River Vilia, which is situated with regard to the Vilna-Moldeczno



that narrow space in time. They got as far as Slonim by the 18th, but that was much too far south. Thus the lower prong of the pincers could not close up, and by September 18 the failure of the encircling movement was sealed. Vilna, of course, was lost to the Russians, and the railway line which went with it, but yet again the salient

northerly operations, except for heavy and continuous fighting, which continued long after the movement was ended, at Dvinsk, and similar operations nearer Riga. In the middle zone Prince Leopold of Bavaria had advanced as fast as the Russians would let him, eastwards of Bielostok. An attempt on his part to hasten their



After the Battle: Galician peasants returning to their homes—often to find them in ruins—after the fighting had left their vicinity

had been straightened out, and there was little prospect that another would be formed. The failure had cost the Germans more than the attempt was worth. The Russians had struck hard at the cavalry at Vilecka on the 23rd, capturing men and eight guns; they inflicted other checks on them at Smorgon and along the line of the Vilja while they made their own retreat good.

This plan, for which the credit or the blame must be assigned to Von Hindenburg, sums up the more

retirement met with a damaging check at Slonim; but on the whole the German line from Vilna to the marshes progressed slowly eastwards. Von Mackensen's part at this time was subordinate to that of Von Hindenburg. His was the section which joined up the Germans of the north to the Germans of the south across the Pripet Marshes. Before the operations of the Vilna salient developed he was moving northwards and north-eastwards through Dabno to Rovno, his command also edging towards



The Women's Share in Russia: Soldiers' wives waiting for news from the Front during the Great Retreat

Pinsk, which is the outpost of the marshes. His progress was chequered by vigorous counter-offensives on the part of the Russians, who successfully attacked him north-west of Rovno on September 13, and on September 23 drove him back out of the town of Lutz or Luck in Volhynia, capturing 128 officers and 6000 men.

If the advance eastwards of Prince Leopold and of Von Mackensen had been slow and unproductive of much beyond wasted territory and desolate marsh, the German-Austrians in Galicia south of the Pripet Marshes had fared a good deal worse. The Pripet River gives its name to a vast basin of 50,000 square miles of sluggish tributary rivers overflowing into vast swamps. More difficult fighting-ground can hardly be imagined. It is the Russian version of the Masurian Lakes. Theoretically, this vast region

cut the fighting-lines and the armies operating between them into two halves. In practice, connection could be maintained by the Russians during much of the operations, along the railway line running from Vilna on the north through Baranovitchi and Luneniecz to Rovno, and by roads one of which runs through Pinsk to Rovno. The occupation of Pinsk by the Germans interrupted this intercommunication, and Ivanoff's southern armies then became an independent unit served by the Kiev railway. His was a splendid isolation, which never ceased to give the Germans trouble; and even in the darkest hours of the Russian retirement north of the Pripet his soldiers were constantly able to respond with a victory as a consolation. These operations were part of the Russian strategic plan of never entirely losing touch



The Germanic Slice out of Russian Territory to the end of the Summer Campaign of 1915



with the southern frontier of Bessarabia. But, regarded merely as unrelated military movements, they presented during September a rather striking reminder of the price which was being exacted from the Germans

wards in a continual and bloody struggle. On August 30 a Russian victory on the Strypa captured 3000 prisoners, and on September 7 they began an attack at Tarnopol on the Sereth and at Trembowla which in



The Russian Retreat in Galicia: German officers cross-examining peasants in the stricken countryside

for their acquisition of territory. The list of them begins towards the end of August, and the chief fighting throughout September was on the line of the Strypa, where every attempt of the Germans to advance was fiercely contested, and where the forces swayed backwards and for-

three days' fighting gave them a total of 33,000 prisoners. It may have been the evident inability of the German-Austrian forces to prevent these blows in the south which was the key to Lord Kitchener's prophecy.

E. S. G.



## CHAPTER IV

## THE SUMMER OF 1915 AT SEA

(July–September)

General Conditions—Home Waters and the Defence against the Submarine—The Outer Circle—Episodes—The *Meteor*—Cases of the *Arabic* and *Hesperian*—The Danube—Austrian Submarines in the Adriatic and Germans in the Dardanelles—Loss of the *Royal Edward*—The Black Sea—Operations in the Baltic—British Submarines—German and Russian Fleets—The Gulf of Riga—Loss of the E 13 at Saltholm.

IT was in the nature of things that the operations at sea during the summer months of 1915 should contain no movement so striking as some which were made in the earlier periods of the war. A glance at the situation as a whole will show that this seeming suspension, or, we may say, stagnation, was inevitable. The careers of the German cruisers on the ocean were over. Others might possibly have slipped out to take their places, but their ends would have been similar and speedy, while there was a high degree of probability that every vessel which did so try to escape through the watch of the British fleet in the North Sea would have been intercepted. To have risked their cruisers in such conditions would have been an act of pure folly on the part of the German authorities. A sortie of their main fleet was even less to be expected during these months than in the earlier period of the war. The British fleet had been reinforced, and could not but have gained in efficiency by months of cruising and practice. A naval battle was as little to be looked for as a renewal of the desperate venture of Admiral von Spee. Since this was the case, the British fleet was

forcibly confined to the immensely important work of blockade. It suspended German trade on the outer seas. It covered the transport of men and stores to the seats of war on land. It applied the steady pressure by which Germany might be exhausted. The duty was admirably performed, and was of vital value. But blockade may be said to be rather a condition than a series of events, and when we have noted its general character there is little more to be said.

Until the end of June, 1915, the Germans had struggled fiercely enough to counteract this supremacy of the British navy by their so-called submarine blockade. By that date they had already failed to produce the results they aimed at. During the summer months their efforts grew constantly more feeble, till they may be said to have ceased. Down to the end of September we continued to hear of German submarines in action here and there outside the Baltic and the Mediterranean, but we heard less and less of them, till they seemed to fall out of sight.

It is probable that considerations of an international character had some share in bringing about this practical

relinquishment of the attempted submarine blockade. The sinking of the *Lusitania* had rendered the relations of Germany to the United States so bad that an open breach looked certain. There are indications that the prospect had a subduing effect on the German Government. The protests of the German Foreign Office and the discovery that unscrupulous use of submarines for the purpose of enforcing blockade was adding to the burdens of Germany, without producing any corresponding effect on the flow of British commerce, must have had some effect even on Admiral von Tirpitz, the great advocate of frightfulness at sea. Yet we cannot doubt that if the Admiral's calculations had been proved to be just, if the submarine blockade had succeeded in so disorganizing British commerce as to produce general distress, the German Government would have hazarded a quarrel with the United States. But Admiral von Tirpitz was shown to be out in his calculations. They were directly defeated by the counter-measures of the British Admiralty.

Mention has been made in previous chapters and in several places of the precautions taken to close certain trade routes, to cover those which were left open, and to guard ports. We have already spoken of the use made of mine-fields and of the watch kept by small men-of-war—destroyers, patrol-boats, armed trawlers. To these were to be added the nets which were stretched across passages likely to be used by the submarines. It was necessary that the place of these protectors should be known to merchant

shipping. Nor was strict secrecy necessary in this case. The knowledge that his way will be barred by an obstruction which he cannot avoid will only cause an assailant to keep away, which is the very result they are designed to produce. The use of booms or chains or rows of stakes to bar a passage is very ancient. But the boom or chain would not stop the submarine, which can dive below them, while barriers of the nature of a wall would stop the movement of trade. Nets which can be so arranged as to leave the surface free while they could entangle the under-water craft which endeavoured to pass exactly met the case. And the net could be rendered more than a merely passive barrier by arming it with mines which would close on and destroy the entangled submarine. These defences, active and passive, did in the course of the summer shut the narrow seas to the enemy. They could not be made complete in such open spaces as lie to the north of Scotland or between the south coast of Ireland and Finisterre. In these regions the main defence must always be a numerous and vigilant surface watch. But where they were most needed, in the approaches to harbours and in the Channel, they were fully successful. At no time did the German submarines strike a blow at the vessels employed in transporting troops or stores to the Continent or to the Mediterranean. Thus the foundation of our power in this war was especially guarded. What losses the Germans suffered in the course of their unsuccessful strife with the counter-measures of the British Admiralty

cannot at present be stated with precision. Mr. Balfour described them as formidable. The numbers given were not official, but were private estimates or such generalities as were allowed to be known by the authorities. The essential fact is that the German submarine activity failed either to suspend British seaborne commerce or to break the routes used by British troops.

When we look from the centre to the outer scene of the naval operations the same conditions are found to be repeated. There were no naval battles, because in no case were equivalent forces found to be opposed to one another. Everywhere was to be seen the conflict between the greater surface force and the submarine. This was the characteristic feature of the whole campaign or set of campaigns. On the oceans, for the reasons given above, all was quiet, but in the Mediterranean, in the Black Sea, and in the Baltic there was activity. Lest we should lose sight of the wood because of the trees, it seems advisable to stop for a moment and state the general conditions.

In the Dardanelles the appearance of the German submarines had a certain effect. It was thought advisable to withdraw the newer battle-ships to safer stations. Their withdrawal subjected the older ships to the greater danger, and we have already recorded the loss of the *Triumph* and of the *Majestic*. Admiral de Robeck was compelled to transfer his flag from vessel to vessel. The enemy could boast a certain measure of success. He had hampered and disturbed, but

he failed entirely to suspend the aid which the navy gave to the troops landed in the Gallipoli Peninsula.

In the Black Sea the Russian fleet cruised unchecked by the Germans and Turks. It intercepted trade and the movements of troops and stores.

In the Baltic the Russians were less able to act on the offensive; but they did act with a certain measure of success, and a peculiar interest attaches to this scene of naval operations because of the intervention of British submarines, which may fairly be said to have been the most notable feature of the whole summer campaign on the sea.

When the general situation is defined we can turn to the particular incidents in their respective places, beginning with home waters, where in the conditions described the least would be likely to happen. As has been already said, the period was marked by the subsidence of the submarine blockade. It did not occur all at once, nor without spasms of revival. Thus in the week ending on August 25 the loss of British shipping shot up to the actual highest figure it reached. The Admiralty reported the sinking or capture of nineteen merchant-vessels of 76,627 tons, and of three fishing-vessels of 391 tons. It is, when taken by itself, a large figure; but the importance of a loss is always comparative. During the same period 1369 steamers of more than 300 tons, engaged in oversea trade, were entered or cleared at British ports. The percentage of loss was not high. If the entrances and clearances had diminished even slightly, the blockade

would have been shown to have produced some effect. But that was far from having been the case. The pressure the Germans were able to apply was not continuous, and it is to be noted that they were more busy in the middle part of August, 1915, than at other dates. On the 16th of the month one of their submarines shelled

some extent injured private persons but did no harm whatever to the military resources of the British Empire, which were not affected in the least by a few local fires. About the same time (August 8) H. M. auxiliary cruiser *India* (Commander W. G. A. Kennedy, R.N.) was torpedoed in Norwegian territorial waters. She was for-



Germany's Submarine War: the torpedoing of the outward-bound White Star Liner *Arabic* off the Irish coast, August 19, 1915

Parton, Harrington, and Whitehaven, small towns on the Cumberland coast, and did some slight damage. This merely vexatious attack may have been meant as an answer to nearly contemporary operations by British submarines in the Sea of Marmora, or it may have had no other purpose than to remind the British public that their enemy was still prowling on the coast. It was in either case an example of a purely mischief-making raid, which to

merly a P. and O. steamer, and was of 7900 tons. Eighty of her crew were saved. Three days after this incident the German auxiliary cruiser *Meteor* ran a brief career in the same waters. She was a vessel of 3613 tons, formerly the property of the Hamburg-Amerika Line. After, as the Germans put it, breaking through—by which must be understood slipping through—the British watch she had the good fortune to meet and



sink the patrol vessel *Ramsey* (Lieutenant Harry Raby), but was next day sighted by four British cruisers. Resistance or flight being equally impossible, the German captain sank his vessel, and was able to reach home with his crew. Thirty-nine of the *Ramsey's* crew were saved out of ninety-four. Before

the *Meteor* went down the prisoners were put in a safe place, together with the crew of a sailing-ship which the *Meteor* had sunk.

The middle of August, as has been noted, saw the last blaze-up of the submarine blockade during the period dealt with, and it also saw the demonstration of the futility of the whole thing. On the 19th the s.s. *Arabic*, of the White Star Line, was torpedoed at a point 60 miles south of the Irish coast. She was a vessel of 15,801 tons gross, and was both a



The Italian Cruiser *Giuseppe Garibaldi*, sunk by an Austrian submarine in the Adriatic, July 18, 1915

passenger- and cargo-boat. The loss of life was comparatively small—thirty-four, including two citizens of the United States. But this attack on a passenger-ship, coming immediately after the correspondence between the German and American Governments about the sinking of the *Lusitania*, confirmed the belief that Germany's word could not be trusted. Germany endeavoured to persuade the world that the *Arabic* had struck a mine. The attempt wholly failed. Captain Finch of the *Arabic* saw the torpedo,

though not the submarine. In the end the Germans were compelled to take another line and protest that the officer in command of the submarine believed that the *Arabic* tried to ram him. It had to apologize to the United States, to promise enquiry, and undertake to rebuke the



The Italian Cruiser *Amalfi*, sunk by an Austrian submarine in the Adriatic, June, 1915

officer responsible. If these assurances represented the policy of the German Government, we can only say that it was indifferently obeyed by its officers. On September 4 the s.s. *Hesperian*, of the Allan Line, bound from Liverpool to Montreal, was torpedoed without warning south-west of the Fastnet. In this case also the loss of life was small—thirty-two out of 600 crew and passengers on board. But the breach of faith was great. The plea of the Germans that no submarine of theirs was in those waters at the time, and that the *Hesperian* struck a mine, broke down before the direct testimony of Captain Smellie of the s.s. *Crossby*, which was on her way to America and saw the attack, and was herself chased. The case of the *Hesperian* was for the time at any rate a closing incident. Submarine activity did not close, but it died down to a very modest level in the North Sea.

Wherever there is water to float on, sea or river, the British navy can act. For the first time in its history it was represented on the upper reaches of the Danube by a naval detachment under the command of Admiral Troubridge. It included a motor-boat, commanded by Lieutenant - Commander Charles Fisher Kerr. She torpedoed an Austrian monitor and drew another on to a mine-field, where it

was destroyed. These activities belonged to the month of June; but the course of events on the Danube did not develop till autumn.

We might almost say as much concerning the naval war in the Adriatic and Mediterranean. There were incidents, but no decisive movement beyond the point reached by the beginning of summer. The superiority of the Italian fleet in the Adriatic prevented any naval action between large ships, but the Austrian submarines were active, and achieved some measure of success. The sinking of the Italian cruiser *Amalfi* in June was an appreciable blow to the Allies. The *Amalfi* was a new vessel, dating from 1909, of 9956 tons, carrying 4.10-in. guns and a secondary armament. It is to be observed that the *Amalfi* was attended by a protecting flotilla of destroyers and that the submarine was seen, yet the cruiser was sunk, with the loss of seventy lives. The loss of the



The British Transport *Royal Edward*, sunk by a German submarine in the Aegean, with a loss of over 1000 lives, August 14, 1915

Italian submarine *Medusa* appears to have been an incident without precedent in this war, and may remain unique. The divers sent down to examine the wreck reported that they found an Austrian submarine beside her. The two would seem, therefore, to have met below the surface and to

a favourable moment and acting by pure surprise; they assailed openly, and won in spite of a protecting flotilla.

The same moral is to be drawn from the summer operations in the Dardanelles. The submarine is indeed not invincible nor indestructible.

The loss of the French *Mariotte*, a quite new boat of 530 tons, and fitted with six tubes, which was sunk by gunfire, and the loss of the E 7 off the Dardanelles in September, are to be put to the debit side, but the career of the E 7 herself is a testimony of the power of these vessels. At the beginning of the war the E 7 was engaged in operations in the Heligoland Bight under Lieutenant-Commander F. E. B. Fielman, and transferred to the Dardanelles under

Lieutenant-Commander Cochrane. In his hands she was active in the Sea of Marmora, where she bombarded the railway near Kara Burna and destroyed a military train, for which Lieutenant-Commander Cochrane received the D.S.O. He was taken prisoner together with two other officers and twenty-five men.

Shortly before the loss of the E 7 a serious misfortune had happened in the Ægean. On August 14, the s.s. *Royal Edward*, a 12,000-ton turbine steamer,



A Russian Naval Victory in the Baltic: the German mine-layer *Albatross*, run ashore on Gothland with her flag half-way down

have dragged one another down. The loss of the *Amalfi* was followed, on July 18, by the sinking of the *Giuseppe Garibaldi*. She was an old cruiser of 1899, and of 7234 tons. On this occasion, too, the vessel sunk was in company with others—with a whole squadron, in fact—and an attendant flotilla. The circumstances of the loss of both the *Amalfi* and the *Giuseppe Garibaldi* go to prove the formidable character of the submarine attack. The submarines did not win by taking

belonging to the North Canadian Railway Company, and engaged as a transport, was torpedoed by a German submarine and sunk. The *Royal Edward* carried 32 officers and 1350 soldiers in addition to a crew of 200. The troops were reinforcements for the 29th Division and details of the Royal Army Medical Corps. About two-thirds of these 1580 were lost. These misfortunes are incidental to a naval war conducted by instruments of such dreadful power, and befell both sides. The destruction of the Turkish warships *Kheyr-ed-Din Barbarossa* and *Buk-i-Satvet*, the successful operations of Russian ships against Turkish transports and trade in the Black Sea, were more than an equivalent of such feats as those of the German submarines. As the Allies had many more ships at sea than the Central Powers and Turkey, they were more subject to losses of this kind.

The German submarines did indeed achieve one object, which was not, however, a real success for them. They made it too dangerous to keep great warships such as the *Queen Elizabeth* in the neighbourhood of the Dardanelles. Prudence dictated that they should be replaced by vessels less subject to attack by mine and torpedo. In the course of the summer the monitor *Humber*, one of the river ships taken over from the Brazilian Government at the beginning of the war, appeared in those waters, and she was accompanied or followed by others of new types, due to the inventive intellect of Lord Fisher, designed by their draught of water to escape

mines and torpedoes, and yet to carry heavy guns. The hold of the Allies on the Ægean and Dardanelles waters was never shaken, though we must allow that the German submarine made the grip hard to keep.

Events not more decisive but certainly more varied took place in the Baltic during our period. The war, too, in this inland sea showed a more marked development than elsewhere. When the ice began to clear away after April the German navy had, to all appearance, full command, and German trade with the neutral shore of Sweden was not only as active as ever, but was carried to a higher point than in peace. Iron and other metals which abound in Sweden were being imported in larger quantities than ever into Pomeranian ports or to Kiel. By the end of the summer this favourable situation had been materially altered, to the detriment of Germany. Her navy had been checked and her commerce began to suffer from the very form of attack she herself had initiated in the North Sea, the Channel, and on the coast of Ireland, that is to say, by submarines.

The most essential service of a purely military order which was required from the German fleet was to cover the northern flank of the great advance against Russia, first by warding off Russian raids on the coasts of Prussia or in Pomerania, and then by aggressive operations against the Baltic provinces of Russia. The negative part of the double service was easy to perform, but not so the active or aggressive. On July 2 a German squadron consisting of the



coast defence ironclad *Siegfried*, of 4100 tons, and three 9.4 guns, with a squadron of cruisers and torpedo-boats attacked Windau, in Courland. The naval defence of the Russians was conducted by torpedo-boats, and the operation served no other purpose than to divide the attention of the Russian authorities and tie down a certain number of troops to the defence of the coast. An inshore squadron, while occupied in work of this kind, must be covered by other ships from interruption from the sea. The German Government was not likely to omit so elementary a precaution. It had a guarding squadron on the open waters. But, as our own experience in home waters and in the Dardanelles has amply shown, warships while tied to this work of keeping guard run the maximum of danger from counter-attack under the surface. This lesson was enforced on the Germans when, on July 2, the *Pommern* was struck by a torpedo shot at her by a submarine. Though the damage done was not so great as was at first supposed, this stroke was a warning. The Baltic coast of Russia being fringed by islands, with shallow water between them, from the Gulf of Riga northwards, is a dangerous region for ships subject to attack by submarine. It was highly satisfactory to learn that the craft which scored this success was British—the first of a growing number which gave effectual aid to Russia during that campaign.

The damage done to the *Pommern* was part of a series of encounters which took place along the coast, and were sharpest in the neighbourhood

of the Island of Gothland. A Russian squadron, consisting of the *Rurik*, *Makaroff*, *Bayan*, *Bogatyr*, and *Oleg*, while returning from a cruise in the Southern Baltic, succeeded in cutting off a light German squadron of one cruiser of the "Augsburg" class, the mine-layer *Albatross*, and three torpedo boats. In the thick weather then prevailing the Russians drove the *Albatross* ashore and the other vessels to flight, and continued its own course to the north. A brisk encounter followed, in which the *Roon* cruiser appeared to suffer severely. But the Russians, who knew that the enemy would probably be supported, fought in retreat till they met the support of battleships and destroyers near their own coast. The attack of a German submarine, which had presumably come up after the action had begun, was beaten off.

Operations which from the nature of the case consisted largely of such brushes as this must needs be summarized or told with a detail which is impossible here. The pith and substance of the campaign was always for the Germans to put forward, and for the Russians to defeat, the execution of a combined attack on Riga. The town lies at the south of the gulf of that name but about 8 miles up the River Dwina. The gulf, which is about 90 miles long from north to south and 50 wide from east to west, is closed on the north by a number of islands surrounded by shallow water. The only entrance practicable by ships of any size is on the west side, at the northern promontory of Courland. To render any effectual aid to their

army, which had overrun Courland but had not been able to reach Riga, the German navy must first force this one passage. But even when it was in the gulf it could not single-handedly compel the surrender of the town. In case the co-operation with the army failed, the German fleet could not remain in the gulf except

cross the gulf and to make an attack on Pernau on its north-eastern side. The place was bombarded, but the attempt of the Germans to land was unsuccessful. The success they had won was in fact barren. On the south of the gulf their army had not approached Riga near enough for co-operation. While they remained in the enclosed waters of the gulf they ran a risk from attack by British submarines. The entry was in fact premature, and after a short stay the German squadron passed out again to the open sea.

The week in which the operations took place in the Gulf of Riga saw one of the worst incidents of the whole war. It occurred on August 19, and was reported by Lieutenant-Commander Layton of the submarine E 13. This officer was entering or was operating in the Baltic when his vessel grounded on the Danish island Salt-holm, at the mouth of the Sound. It was then early in the morning, and a Danish torpedo-boat warned Lieutenant-Commander Layton that he would be allowed twenty-four hours in which to get her off. As the E 13 was firmly fixed, and could not get off by her own efforts, she would of course have been interned. But the German naval officers who were in the neighbourhood apparently thought that they would do well to make sure. The stranding of the E 13 had been observed by one hostile destroyer which remained close to her till two other Danish vessels approached. The German then withdrew, but at about 9 a.m. she returned with two others. One of them hoisted a commercial signal.



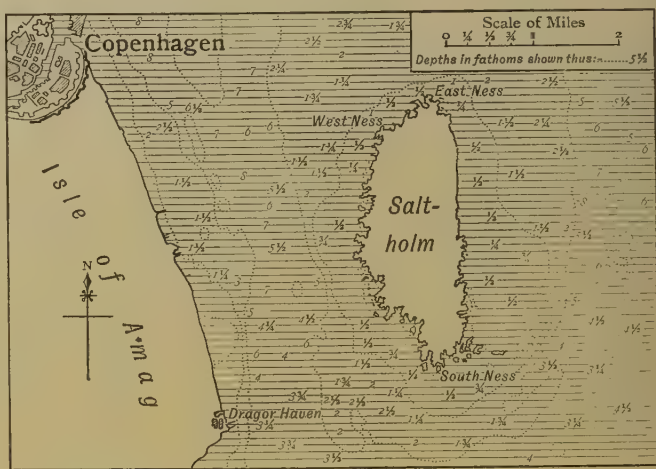
Scene of the Naval Operations in the Gulf of Riga

by running very serious risk from torpedo attack.

After a series of attacks and mine-sweeping operations, which began before August 19, the Germans, who were numerically very superior to their opponents, did succeed in forcing the entry on the 20th. The Germans confess to having lost three torpedo-boats on Russian mines, but claim to have inflicted much more serious loss on their opponents. It was not denied by the Russians that they lost the gunboat *Suvitch*. Neither was it disputed that the Germans were able to

Before it could be read she fired a torpedo, which exploded on the ground. The E 13 was set on fire, and Lieutenant-Commander Layton had no choice but to leave her. While his men were in the water endeavouring to reach the shore, the Germans opened fire with all their guns. One of the Danish boats immediately placed herself so as to cover the E 13, and the German then withdrew. The survivors of the British crew were interned, but Lieutenant-Commander Layton succeeded later on in escaping. The number of British lives lost was fifteen. Germany apologized to Denmark for this violation of her neutrality. The apology was certainly called for. Disregard of the rights of weak neutrals has always been but too common in naval warfare, and Great Britain may be said to have set the example at Masafuera, in the neutral waters of Chile. But the barbarity of firing at the men in the water at a time when their vessel was manifestly destroyed was a refinement of ferocity of which the Germans gave many examples in this war. The loss of the E 13, as might have been foreseen, had no effect in checking the activity of British submarines in the Baltic. They continued to act, and, at a period rather later than that with which we are now concerned,

they were extremely active in intercepting German trade. Nor was the destruction of German trade the only service which could be rendered by British submarines in the Baltic. They could help materially to cover the northern flank of the Russian armies. So long as the German navy remained so superior in numbers to its opponents in that sea as to exercise full command, the Russian forces



Scene of the Loss of the British Submarine, E 13 on the Danish Island Saltholm, August 19, 1915

were exposed to the danger that hostile troops would be landed behind them, and that their position on the frontier would be rendered untenable. The presence of our submarines and their activity put a check on the German offensive—not enough to stop the advance of their armies perhaps—but enough to delay them and to help to deprive them of the full advantage they had hoped to gain by their campaign in Poland and the Russian Baltic provinces.

D. H.

## CHAPTER V

## THE SUMMER CAMPAIGN ON THE WESTERN FRONT

(June—August, 1915)

After the Battle of Festubert—Renewed Activity round Ypres—Gallant British Gunners—Successful Attack of 11th Infantry Brigade—Intrepid Work of Royal Flying Corps—How Captain Hawker and Captain Liddell won their V.C.'s—Death of Captain Mapplebank—Other Heroes of the Air—German Trickery—Brave Acts rewarded—The French National Fête in 1915—Fresh Battles round Hooge—Germany's New Weapon of Frightfulness—The *Flammenwerfer* attack at Hooge—"New Army's" ordeal—Heroes of the Defence—Lost Positions won back with Interest—The 6th Division's Clock-work attack—Glorious Deeds of the 2nd Durham Light Infantry—Battle honours of the Shropshires, York and Lancasters, Sherwood Foresters, and other regiments on August 9-10—The Germans accept Defeat—Lull in the fighting along the British Front—Marking time for the September offensive—Second-Lieutenant Boyd-Rochfort's Victoria Cross—On the Belgian Front—King Albert's "New" Army—French progress north of Arras—German Crown-Prince's Campaign in the Argonne—Situation round the St. Mihiel salient—The Campaign in the Vosges—Successful "Nibbling" in Alsace.

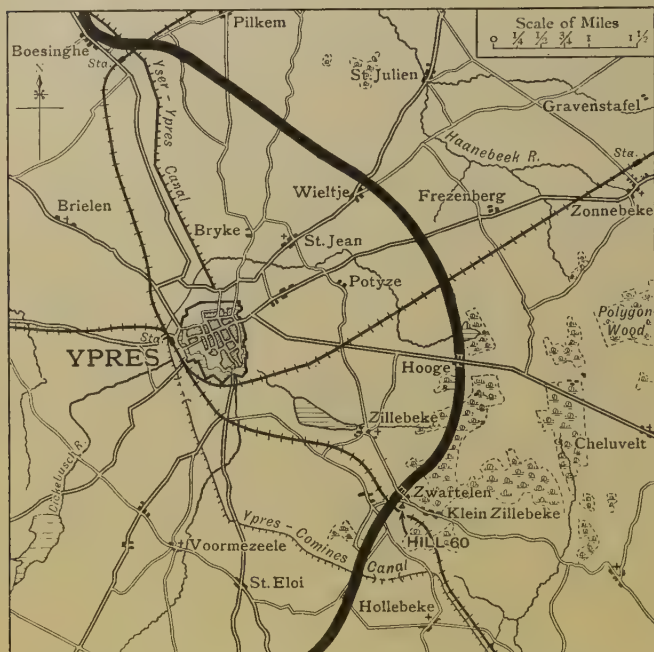
WHEN the battle of Festubert and the minor engagements which followed it in the month of June, 1915, had gradually subsided, the storm-centre of the British front returned, as on so many previous occasions, to the stricken salient at Ypres, where the defending line of Sir John French's Second Army now extended to the north as far as the village of Boesinghe, on the banks of the Yser-Ypres Canal. Over the rest of the front "no change in the situation" became the chief report of the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, until the great Allied Offensive of the following September. Mining and artillery activity increased in intensity, however, on both sides, and many a local fight, short, sharp, and sanguinary, was fought in the ceaseless struggle for points of advantage between the opposing lines. It was not surprising, where of necessity the point of view was totally different, that the German and Allied accounts of the same operations more often than not

flatly contradicted each other. There was an instance of this in the accounts of a smart little affair north of Ypres on Sunday, July 4, which the German wireless report the next day claimed as the repulse of a British attack with heavy loss. The truth was that the sole object of this minor operation was the destruction of a sap which the enemy had been pushing forward, almost due south of Pilkem, not far east of the Yser-Ypres Canal, and that the troops withdrew only when this object was achieved. The sap was blown in by our howitzer-fire, and a platoon of the 2nd Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Buffs) advanced to cover the Royal Engineer party detailed to complete the destruction. The few Germans who survived the artillery bombardment were driven out with the bayonet, and a machine-gun in the sap was found to be destroyed. Second Lieutenant George S. Rawstone, of the 2nd Seaforths, won the Military Cross for showing "the greatest dash in carrying out this



difficult task, and finally, although wounded, carrying out the withdrawal most satisfactorily”.

The true story of this alleged British repulse is completed by the account in the *Gazette* of how Private R. Miller, of the same battalion, earned his Distinguished Conduct Medal:



Map showing approximately the British salient round Ypres during the summer of 1915

“Private Miller, immediately on entering the German sap-head, pushed forward with a non-commissioned officer up a communication-trench and prevented the German bombing-party from getting within range of the Royal Engineer detachment destroying the sap. After the non-commissioned officer had been wounded he remained at his post alone until the whole of the storming-party had been withdrawn.”

Two days later a more substantial

attack was launched against the German trenches in the same region. It had become necessary to wrest from the enemy at this point a length of his front line, forming a threatening salient, and the operation entailed daring work, not only on land and in the air, but also on the water of the

neighbouring canal.

This last phase found mention in Sir John French's dispatch of October 15, 1915, in which the Field-Marshal described how a gun of the 135th Battery, Royal Field Artillery—an 18-pounder—was moved into the front line across the canal in order to destroy the enemy sap-head. To reach its position the gun had to be taken over the high canal embankment, rafted over the canal itself under fire, pulled up the opposite bank, with a slope of 45 degrees, and then dragged over three

trenches and a sky-line to its position in a gun-pit dug for it by the Royal Engineers in the fire-trenches, within 70 yards of the German lines. The incident was quoted by the Field-Marshal merely as an example of the difficulties which his officers and men were constantly called upon to overcome, and of the spirit of initiative and resource which animated them throughout the campaign; but it is

now due to the two officers who were chiefly responsible for the success of this enterprise to add that they were Second-Lieutenant William P. A. Robinson, of the 135th Battery, and Lieutenant Robert L. Withington, 9th Field Company, Royal Engineers,

was very effective, and the infantry, charging with reckless dash, soon found themselves in possession of some 500 yards of German trench and a number of prisoners. "Eye-Witness" adds an interesting foot-note to the field-gun incident referred to above:



The Camera in the Firing Line: instantaneous photograph of a German shell bursting near one of the French guns

A French Rimmaho gun—a short 155 mm. rapid-fire piece—was engaged in range-regulating fire on the Western front when the photograph reproduced above was taken. The German shell, which was heard approaching, exploded harmlessly on open ground about 50 yards away.

both of whom received the Military Cross. The blowing up of the sap and some 30 yards of thick wire entanglement by this gun greatly assisted the attack delivered at 6.20 a.m. by the 11th Infantry Brigade. Our guns also received some timely assistance from the French Artillery. The bombardment was not prolonged, but it

"Having done great execution on the German defences at close range during the bombardment, the detachment of a field-gun charged forward with the infantry when the assault took place".

By this time the mist, which had crept up during the night and shrouded the whole of the low-lying area of the canal with an impenetrable veil, had



Official Photograph issued by the French War Office

### The War against German Aircraft: a "Listening Post" in the French anti-aircraft Section

These listening posts in the French army consist of four huge horns, which gather up the slightest sound and magnify it by means of a microphone, so that it is impossible for an enemy or other aviator to approach unheard. The horns may be described as reversed megaphones.



somewhat lifted, and the troops of the 11th Infantry Brigade, who had been crouching under cover waiting impatiently for the bombardment to cease, had little difficulty in finding their way to the enemy's position.

One of the Military Crosses won in the attack fell to Second-Lieutenant Arthur E. Stevens, of the 2nd Prince of Wales's Volunteers (South Lancashire Regiment) attached to the 1st Hampshires, who led the grenadier platoon of that battalion with the greatest courage, and was the first man into the German trenches, where he used his grenades with deadly effect until he was wounded. The 1st Battalion Rifle Brigade also distinguished itself, gallantly and efficiently led until he was wounded by Captain Oscar C. Downes, who was awarded the D.S.O. The D.C.M. fell to Acting-Corporal T. Lewis, of the same battalion, for keeping the enemy at bay with dogged courage on the extreme left of the position, in the face of repeated bombing attack. He remained in this position twenty-four hours after his company had been relieved, and until he was the only survivor of the party left behind. Once a shell buried him with a non-commissioned officer, who was wounded; "but Corporal Lewis", adds the *Gazette*, "remained firmly at his post".

Elsewhere throughout the captured line the struggle to hold what had been won at comparatively little cost was equally intense. Evidently the Germans were unprepared for an infantry attack, for "Eye-Witness" mentions that they left a surprising amount of equipment and gear of all

sorts when they bolted, as well as hot coffee and unopened letters in some of the dug-outs. "Many German pouches were found to be filled with cigars, and these were pronounced to be of good quality by our men, as was the coffee." Three counter-attacks during the day were beaten off, but during the night, when the close-range combat continued without ceasing, the enemy succeeded in regaining a small portion of the lost line, leaving the bulk of it, however, still in our hands. For this a supreme attempt was made on the following day, the Germans little realizing, as they hurled their fresh counter-attack in the afternoon, that some of the British guns actually engaged in repelling the assault were being watched by no less a soldier than Lord Kitchener himself, accompanied by Mr. Asquith, who had just left the ruins of Ypres on a memorable tour of inspection. It was the British War Minister's first visit to the army in the field, as mentioned on p. 7. Unable to face the fire of our guns, the German infantry retired, and the tussle resolved itself into an artillery duel, maintained right through the night and throughout the ensuing twenty-four hours.

Here, as elsewhere, the success of the artillery co-operation was in no small degree due to the intrepid work of the Royal Flying Corps. On July 6, when the British carried this section of the German line, Second-Lieutenant Oliver D. Filley won the D.S.O. for a series of daring exploits while co-operating in this way. On two occasions, although not in a special fighting-machine, he and his observer were



attacked by German aeroplanes, but each time drove them away and resumed their perilous work. Finally two other hostile machines approached simultaneously, and, although the British flyers had only five rounds of ammunition left, they at once proceeded to attack. In this encounter, unhappily, the observer was killed in the act of firing, and the engine damaged, but Second - Lieutenant Filley succeeded in bringing his machine out of action, landing safely within the British lines.

More and more as the campaign proceeded the ascendancy of the Royal Flying Corps asserted itself over the German air-craft, Sir John French according unstinted praise in his dispatches to the continuous improvement both in the methods and in the material employed, as well as to the ingenuity and courage displayed by the officers. One exciting experience which deserves to be recorded, though it took place some weeks before the action in which Second-Lieutenant Filley won his D.S.O., was a combat at a height of some 4000 feet in which another British machine, manned by two officers whose names, unfortunately, were not mentioned in any account published at the time, while reconnoitring over Poelcapelle, en-



The End of a Flight over the Firing Line: an aeroplane's billet in the tree-tops

gaged a large German biplane having a double fuselage, two engines, and a pair of propellers. At first this superbplane circled round the British machine, hoping to bring it down with shots from a machine-gun, without, however, succeeding. The British observer replied with some fifty rounds at under 200 yards range, apparently with effect, for the great biplane was seen to waver, and then, with a parting volley from its machine-gun, to nose-dive to a level of about 2000 feet, where, flying slowly and erratically, it gradually flattened out its course. Anti-aircraft guns below took up the fight as the British machine turned to complete its reconnaissance, and succeeded in hitting it, whereupon the pilot decided to make for home.

"But", adds 'Eye-Witness', to whom we may leave the rest of this stirring story,

"the petrol tank had been pierced, and, as the aeroplane glided downwards on the slant, the petrol was set alight by the exhaust and ran blazing down to the front of the body of the aeroplane, which travelled on to the accompaniment of the rattle of musketry as the unexpended rounds of machine-gun ammunition exploded in the heat and those in the pilot's loaded revolver went off. The pilot, however, did not lose control, and the aeroplane proceeded steadily on its downward course. Before it reached the ground a large part of the framework had been destroyed, and even the hardwood blades of the propeller were so much burnt that the propeller ceased to revolve in the rush of air. When the machine finally landed behind our lines, both the officers were severely burned, and the pilot, on climbing hurriedly out of the blazing wreck, tripped over a wire stay, fell, and sprained his knee. The few still serviceable portions of the aeroplane were then

salved and collected under the shrapnel-fire of the German guns. As an example of a terse, unvarnished statement of fact, the last words of the pilot's official report of this adventure are worthy of quotation:—

"... the whole of the nacelle (body) seemed to be in flames. We landed at W. 35 n P. 16 (Z Series 93 E.W. 1/35,500)."

Two Victoria Crosses were won in the following month for other thrilling air reconnaissances, the first by Captain L. G. Hawker, who, little more than three months previously, had earned the D.S.O. for his intrepidity in bombing a German airship shed at Gontrode. On July 25, Captain Hawker engaged three German aeroplanes, each armed with a machine-gun, and manned by an observer as well as a pilot. Undismayed by these heavy odds Captain Hawker not only proceeded to attack, but defeated them all, one seeking safety in flight, another being forced to descend in a crippled condition, and the third destroyed, both occupants being killed. It was for this brilliant achievement that Captain Hawker received his V.C. Six days later Captain John Aidan Liddell, 3rd Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and Royal Flying Corps, also won the Victoria Cross, only, alas! to lose his life. Captain Liddell was on a flight over Ostend-Bruges-Ghent at a great height when he was severely wounded, his right thigh being broken. For a moment he lost consciousness, but by a superhuman effort, after his machine had dropped nearly 3000 feet, he succeeded in regaining partial control, and, notwithstanding his collapsed state and although continually



Captain J. A. Liddell, 3rd Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and Royal Flying Corps, who won the V.C. on July 31, 1915, but died of his wounds



Where some of the German prisoners were taken. The arrival of a fresh batch at Casablanca, Morocco

fired at, in completing his course, bringing the aeroplane safely back into our lines half an hour after he had been wounded.

"The difficulties experienced by this officer in saving his machine and the life of his observer", to quote from the official account in the *Gazette*, "cannot be readily expressed, but as the control-wheel and control-throttle were smashed, and also one of the under-carriage struts, it would seem incredible that he could have accomplished his task."

Unhappily, Captain Liddell succumbed to his wounds, but he lived long enough to learn that his heroism had been rewarded with the highest honour that the King could bestow. Another grievous loss to the Royal Flying Corps was the death in the

following month of Captain Gilbert W. R. Mapplebank while trying a new French monoplane at Dartford. Captain Mapplebank was among the first airmen to carry out reconnaissances over the enemy's lines, and had rendered invaluable aid from the retreat from Mons until the time of his death, winning the D.S.O. for a daring raid in the dark during the spring of 1915. Three more awards for the war in the air deserve to be recorded before resuming the thread of our narrative of the summer campaign in the trenches. Three days before Captain Liddell won the V.C., Captain Lionel W. B. Rees, Royal Artillery and Royal Flying Corps, fought one of a series of duels which even in the unemotional words of the official *Gazette* seem to



belong more to romance than reality. In his first duel Captain Rees attacked and drove down a hostile monoplane in spite of the fact that the main spar of his own machine had been shot down and the rear spar shattered. In the following month, accompanied by Flight-Sergeant Hargreaves, he fought a German machine more powerful than his own for three-quarters of an hour, then, returning for more ammunition, renewed the attack, finally bringing down the enemy's craft, apparently wrecked. Yet again, on a later occasion, when flying an aeroplane with one machine-gun, and accompanied as before by Flight-Sergeant Hargreaves, he sighted another large German biplane, armed with two quick-firers, some 2000 feet below, and at once decided to attack.

"He spiralled down, and dived at the enemy, who, having the faster machine, manœuvred to get him broadside on, and then opened fire. In spite of this, Captain Rees pressed his attack and apparently succeeded in hitting the enemy's engine, for the machine made a quick turn, glided some distance, and finally fell just inside the German lines near Herbecourt."

For this series of fearless deeds Captain Rees was awarded the Military Cross, and Flight-Sergeant Hargreaves the D.C.M. The Military Cross was also won about the same time by Second-Lieutenant (temporary Captain) Arthur A. B. Thomson, Royal Warwicks and Royal Flying Corps, whose grit and determination over the German trenches near Neuve Chapelle resulted in ten direct hits on



First Aid in the Firing Line: Removing a wounded man from the French trenches  
(From one of the official photographs of the French Army)



the enemy's parapet. Captain Thomson was ranging a heavy gun on the position at the time, and though it was raining heavily stayed up for two hours, with clouds at about 500 feet.

"At one time he found himself in a cloud on the far side of the German trenches; but, after coming back under heavy fire, he

graphing the positions of the enemy, bombing the communications, and reconnoitring over hostile territory has gone on unceasingly." During this period the number of combats in the air amounted to no fewer than 240, in nearly every case the British pilots having to seek the enemy behind his



Hunting for German Snipers on the Western Front: a French raid on a ruined farmhouse between the opposing lines

continued to observe with the greatest bravery and skill, only returning when too dark for more work."

Well might Sir John French repeatedly write in praise of the courage and efficiency of the flying officers of this new and now indispensable arm. "Throughout the summer," he wrote in one of his dispatches covering this period, "notwithstanding most unfavourable weather, the work of co-operating with the artillery, photo-

own lines, where he could fight in co-operation with his movable anti-aircraft guns.

"In spite of this", adds Sir John French, "they have succeeded in bringing down four of the German machines behind our trenches and at least twelve in the enemy's lines, and many more have been seen to dive to earth in a damaged condition or to have retired from the fight. On one occasion an officer of the Royal Flying Corps engaged four enemy machines and drove them off, proceeding on his reconnaissance.

On another occasion two officers engaged six hostile machines and disabled at least one of them."

As further evidence of the dangers which our flying officers were called upon to face, the Field-Marshal mentions that one of their machines was hit in no fewer than 300 places soon after crossing the enemy's lines; yet the officer successfully carried out his mission. For the valuable work rendered throughout this period by the Royal Flying Corps, Sir John acknowledged his indebtedness to the corps commander, Brigadier-General Hugh M. Trenchard, C.B., D.S.O., who had been advanced to that rank in the reorganization of the higher command consequent upon the rapid development of the Air Service, Major-General Sir David Henderson devoting his whole energies to his increasing duties as Director-General of Military Aeronautics.

The Germans, to their credit be it said, were not behindhand in courageous flying, and our officers of the Royal Flying Corps had reason to treat their anti-aircraft guns with respect. One ingenious trick on their part, which, unlike too many of their methods in warfare, was cunning without being treacherous, was evolved for foiling the system adopted by our officers on occasion, when they sent back messages by means of daylight signals while on reconnaissance or observation duty. Taking advantage of the difficulty of distinguishing between friend and foe when an aeroplane passed overhead at a great height, the Germans, as soon as a British machine started using these

flares, opened fire on certain areas below it, to create the impression in the British anti-aircraft section that the aeroplane was a German scout directing the fire of the German guns, and should therefore be brought down. It was a subtler trick than that by which the Germans sought to cure some of our ardent collectors of war trophies by leaving about their trenches new and apparently perfect helmets containing bombs, which exploded immediately on being picked up.

Though the middle of July, 1915, found no change in the general situation, both sides still took deadly toll with sniping, bombing, mining, and artillery-fire. North of Ypres the struggle for the captured German trenches and other points raged intermittently, the Germans failing to secure any permanent advantage. On the evening of Saturday, July 10, after a whole day's bombardment, they rushed a short length of one of the trenches taken by us on the 6th, but this was at once recaptured and retained. The 5th (Territorial) Battalion of the York and Lancaster Regiment lost heavily in this affair, but proved their mettle, three of them—Lance-Corporal A. Calvert, who gave invaluable assistance to his platoon commander at a critical period, and Lance-Corporal J. Yates and Private A. Gwynnette, both of whom rendered heroic service to the wounded—receiving the D.C.M.

While the British were thus holding their own round Ypres many other gallant deeds were done which found no mention at the time in any of the published accounts or dispatches. We can rescue at least some of these from the

oblivion of the *Gazette*. On Monday the 12th, for example, a disaster was averted by the daring of a party of Royal Engineers. The enemy had exploded a mine just short of our parapet, and, a gallery being driven out to protect the trench, another Ger-

attached to the Royal Engineers from the Royal Field-Artillery, Second-Lieutenant William Cooper, R.E., and four men. The rewards for this skilful and highly dangerous achievement included the D.S.O. for Captain Hepburn and the D.C.M. for the



Modern Warfare on the Western Front: French soldiers with their gas masks ready for an asphyxiating attack

man mine was struck. It was found to contain a charge of about 1350 pounds of explosive, some detonators, and part of the main electric firing lead. These were successfully withdrawn by the united efforts of Captain William Clay Hepburn, attached to the 172nd Company Royal Engineers from the 1st (Territorial) Battalion Monmouthshire Regiment, Lieutenant G. A. Syme,

other two officers. It was on the same day and in the same region that a Territorial private—E. Preston, of the 6th West Yorkshires—won the D.C.M. at the cost of twelve wounds in the following circumstances, as duly reported in the *Gazette*:—

“A high-explosive shell dropped on the top of a dug-out and broke it in, completely burying two men who were asleep in it.



Two men at once commenced to dig them out from the front of the dug-out, but Private Preston went outside into the open and attempted to dig out their heads from the back, exhibiting the utmost heroism and total disregard of danger in endeavouring to save his comrades' lives at the risk of his own. The next shell burst within 5 yards of him, and he was wounded in twelve places."

That was the kind of warfare and that the kind of courage which made this long - drawn - out campaign so murderous yet at the same time so fruitful in reviving the old heroic qualities of the British race. The West Yorkshire Territorials distinguished themselves repeatedly under this nerve-shaking shell-fire in the summer of 1915. Twice in one bombardment later in the same month were dug-outs destroyed of the 7th Battalion (Leeds Rifles) of this regiment, on each occasion the officer and the men involved being recovered only by the united efforts—at great personal risk under a heavy shell-fire—of Lieutenant Arthur R. Glazebrook, who received the Military Cross, and Privates J. Bentley and M. Garrity, both of whom were rewarded with the D.C.M.

On July 13 another Territorial battalion, the 4th (Hallamshire) added to the laurels of the same regiment under a similar ordeal, when a machine-gun detachment, holding an advanced trench during a furious bombardment, was at last practically demolished. Although the party and the gun were buried they managed to extricate themselves and kept the gun in action, remaining in their isolated

position for twenty-four hours. It was for this plucky stand that the D.C.M. was awarded to Sergeant W. Hutchinson and Privates J. W. Biggin and J. Cowlshaw. The ebb and flow of the German counter-attack in which



The Summer Campaign on the German Front: one of the Kaiser's Red Cross men masked for a gas attack, with oxygen apparatus for rendering aid to the German asphyxiated

this incident took place was described as follows by "Eye-Witness":—

"About 10 a.m. one of our advanced posts on the Verlorenhoek road, to the east of Ypres, was suddenly rushed. It was at once retaken. Still, unable to acquiesce in our retention of the ground captured by us a week before to the north of Ypres—which was of considerable value to them—the enemy during the night concentrated the fire of their heavy howitzers on



it, throwing many gas projectiles. They then, under cover of this gas attack, assaulted and once more got possession of a section of the front line held by us of the ground we had taken on the 6th. Our bombers at once counter-attacked, drove back the hostile infantry, and reoccupied the trench."

Next day came the French National Fête of July 14, marked this year not with the universal festivities of peace time but with the solemn vows of a nation fighting for its very life. The flags of the Allies were proudly flown in the towns and villages of the area occupied by the British army, but the most memorable form of commemoration was the simple and touching reverence paid to the graves of the fallen, French, British, and Belgians alike. This was carried out by the association which, under the name of the Souvenir Français, exists to pay respect to the memory of those who have given their lives for France; and on this occasion the simple wooden crosses marking the last resting-places of our fallen were decorated by our Allies no less piously than were those of their own heroes.

The storm-centre round Ypres now reverted to the war-worn region of Hooze, where, on the 19th, after exploding a mine just east of the battered château, our troops rushed about 150 yards of the enemy's trenches and consolidated the gain, capturing fifteen prisoners, including two officers, and two machine-guns, besides destroying two other German machine-guns by the explosion. The honour for this material success, where every yard was of vital importance, fell to the 4th Middlesex, 1st Gordons, and the

Royal Engineers. During the attack Private P. Mackay, of the 1st Gordons, brought both the captured machine-guns back to our trenches under a very heavy rifle-fire, for this, and for setting a fine example of coolness and courage to his comrades throughout the night, receiving the D.C.M. The Military Cross was awarded to Captain Melville Dinwiddie, attached to the same battalion from the 3rd Gordons, who commanded the company holding the crater caused by the explosion of our mine, and the captured trench, from the 19th to the 21st, "displaying the utmost gallantry on the evening of July 20, when a counter-attack seemed imminent". Meantime the Die-Hards were holding on to their part of the trenches with the same indomitable courage. In one critical moment during the night of the 19th, owing to a shortage of bombs, the Germans began to advance down the communication-trench, whereupon Temporary Second-Lieutenant Rupert P. Hallows climbed out into the open, exposing himself fearlessly, and, firing at the enemy, checked the advance. Throughout the night he was indefatigable in securing the position, and was rewarded with the Military Cross, Private W. Pooley, also of the 4th Middlesex, earning the D.C.M. for conspicuous and repeated acts of gallantry on the same occasion. The next night brought another Military Cross to the Die-Hards, this time to Second-Lieutenant Harper M. Lepper, who saved the situation when, during a heavy bombardment, part of his trench was blown in, and communication lost with the next battalion.



Drawn by A. Forestier

Germany's Weapons of Frightfulness: one of the enemy's "Flammenwerfer", or flame projectors, as used in the attack on the British lines at Hooze on July 30, 1915

Second-Lieutenant Lepper extended his platoon through the ruins, and, though twice wounded, remained at his post, keeping up communication and sending in accurate information of the situation. To the Royal Engineers fell the Military Cross, awarded to Second-Lieutenant Geoffrey R. Cassels, of the 175th Company, "for very valuable services during the months of June and July, 1915, in conducting the mining operations at Hooze with conspicuous ability and energy, which materially contributed to the success achieved"; and the Distinguished Conduct Medal, to Driver J. Costello, attached to the same company from the Army Service Corps, who, with conspicuous gallantry and devotion under shell-fire, "never failed to arrive with his wagon-load of supplies and material essential to the work in hand".

Failing to make any further impression on the British lines round Ypres, the Germans at this stage adopted their new device of the *Flammenwerfer*, or flame projector, for forcing burning liquid into our trenches with a strong jet, just as they had adopted asphyxiating gases—now rendered comparatively innocuous by the methods adopted for protecting the troops—when they found that fair means alone would never win a path for them to Calais. These new weapons of frightfulness had already been used against the French, and were probably the same engines as those employed in the first great German onrush at the beginning of the war in order to complete the work of destruction in the towns and villages captured by

them. "Eye-Witness" quotes printed evidence from the instructions issued to the Second German Army, dated October 16, 1914, at St. Quentin, under the heading: "Arms at the disposal of Pioneers for fighting at close quarters", which proved that the use of burning liquids in this way was contemplated by the German staff quite early in the war, if not before. The quotation is to the following effect:—

"The *Flammenwerfer*, which are very similar to portable fire-extinguishers, are worked by specially trained pioneers and throw a liquid which at once catches fire spontaneously. The jet of fire has an effective range of 30 metres. The effect is immediate and deadly, and the great heat developed forces the enemy back a long way. As they burn for one and a half to two minutes, and can be stopped whenever necessary, short and isolated jets of flame are advisable, so that one charge is sufficient to spray several objectives. Flame projectors will be mainly employed in street and house-to-house fighting, and will be kept in readiness at the place from which an attack starts."

Specimens captured both by the French and British troops showed that the complete apparatus consisted roughly of three main parts, the first two comprising a portable reservoir for holding the inflammable oil—capable of being strapped to a man's back, and containing the liquid and compressed air in separate compartments—and the means of spraying and igniting it, consisting of a hose some 10 feet long, ending in a nozzle about 4 feet long, capable of rotation in any direction. When the valve was turned on, the air pressure pumped out the



oil in a sheet of flame—the liquid being ignited automatically at the nozzle—having a range of between 20 and 30 yards, and spraying at its extremity over about 6 feet, ending in a dense curtain of black smoke. This continued until the oil was exhausted or the air pressure fell too low, when recourse was had to the third part of the complete apparatus — a larger reservoir cylinder for storing the nitrogen by which the necessary pressure was obtained. Each of these larger cylinders could supply sufficient nitrogen for four or five of the flame projectors.

The first effect of this fiendish contrivance on the British lines in the German attack of July 30 may be better imagined than described. It had the same element of horror and confusion as in the first great gas surprise three months before, but brought the enemy no corresponding success, though for a time it enabled him to penetrate our first-line trenches at Hooge on a front of about 500 yards. The trenches against which this new device was launched in the early hours of Friday, July 30, were still held by the Second Army, now strengthened by some of "Kitchener's men". The attack began about 3 a.m. with a concentrated bombardment from guns of every calibre and trench mortars directed on the ground won by us on the 19th. It fell to part of the New Army to bear the brunt of this its first serious engagement, and the casualty lists subsequently told how heavy was the toll then taken of the flower of young English manhood — 'Varsity men of promise and distinction, and

old public-school boys from all parts of the kingdom, who had flocked to the colours at the outbreak of war. The men stood the first ordeal of the bombardment magnificently, though the position, practically flattened out, was desperately difficult to hold. Then, however, came the added and wholly unexpected horror of the blinding, burning sheets of flame, like the eighth circle of Dante's *Inferno*, where it blows in gusts of blazing snow. Even this failed for a time to achieve its object, some of the defenders, roused to fury by the enemy's new devilment, mounting the shattered parapets and firing through the flames. The position, however, became untenable, and most of the infantry holding the trenches were forced back. "The flames blinded the men," wrote one who took part in the fight, "and while they were still blind the Germans charged and took the trench." Some of the adjoining troops were cut off from reinforcements, and, fired on from three sides, with the ground fairly rocking and the air shaking under the appalling racket of the rival guns, went through an experience before which the toughest veterans might have quailed and suffered no disgrace. The British artillery saved the situation by some marvellous shooting.

"They were firing from about 3 miles away, and dropping shells right into the German trenches, which were only 40 yards from ours," wrote the correspondent already referred to, "and a slight mistake in the range meant disaster for us. They kept this up for fourteen hours, and only five of all the shells they sent over fell into our trenches. But for these shells the Germans would have charged, and in such numbers



that it would have been all UP with us, and, as they were Prussians, there wouldn't have been many prisoners taken. We had trench-mortar bombs and shells for nearly fourteen hours, and there wasn't a man among us who did not think he was in for the 'high jump'. We stuck to our trenches, however, and waited for anything that should come along, although it is very hard



Second-Lieutenant Sidney C. Woodroffe, 8th Battalion Rifle Brigade, killed while winning the Victoria Cross at Hooze on July 30, 1915

to stand still and just wait for a shell to hit you. But we did it. We have shown that. Kitchener's army has some go in it. The officers were magnificent, and laughed and joked with us. They worked as hard as any of us, and fired with the men. It showed what they were made of, and we would have done anything they asked of us. They suffered terribly, and very few came back."<sup>1</sup>

One infantry battalion of the New

<sup>1</sup> *Broadstairs Mail*, August 10, 1915.

Army, the 8th Rifle Brigade, lost altogether 19 officers and between 500 and 600 men. The 7th Rifle Brigade as well as the 7th, 8th, and 9th King's Royal Rifle Corps lost only less severely. Feats of incredible gallantry in all ranks were recounted in private letters, but such was the secrecy of this silent war that the official account of this tremendous attack, appearing on three separate days at the time of the occurrence, did not amount to more than ten lines in all. It was but an episode in a struggle which dwarfed all other wars beyond comprehension.

Among the bravest of the brave on this occasion was Second-Lieutenant Sidney C. Woodroffe, of the 8th Battalion, Rifle Brigade, who found his post heavily attacked with bombs from the flank, and subsequently from the rear, after the enemy had broken through the centre of our front trenches. He managed to hold his own until all his own bombs had been exhausted, and then skilfully withdrew his remaining men, only to lead them forward immediately afterwards in a counter-attack under an intense rifle and machine-gun fire. "This very gallant officer", to quote from the *Gazette* announcement that the posthumous honour of the Victoria Cross had been conferred upon him, "was killed while in the act of cutting the wire obstacles in the open", thus giving up his life for King and Country as his elder brother, Lieutenant K. H. C. Woodroffe, had given his less than three months before in attacking the German trenches near Neuve Chapelle.

No account of the harrowing ordeal of July 30, 1915, is more vivid than the story of the noble death of Lieutenant Gilbert Talbot, also of the Rifle Brigade—the youngest son of the Bishop of Winchester—contributed to the *Commonwealth* in the following September by Canon Scott Holland under his initials, "H.S.H.". Talbot's battalion—one of the first

heavily shelled, and then rush an open 150 yards. Gilbert's platoon had to lead the attack. He deployed his men on the edge of the wood, and made them lie down in a low ditch until the artillery preparation was over. At the sound of five whistles they were to make the rush. The whistles blew. Gilbert rose at once and leaped forward, crying: 'Come along, lads, now's your time!' But the platoon had lost heavily in the wood, and, what with this and the



Map showing approximately the German Salient round Hooze after the Liquid-fire Attack of July 30, 1915

of the New Army to be sent to the front firing line—had been ordered to hold "one of those awful craters which our shells had carved out in front of Hooze":

"They held it," continued Canon Scott Holland, "and had just come out of it, when the murderous attack with liquid fire recaptured it. They were turned back at once, after two hours' sleep, half away home, to re-march the eight miles already covered, and to be ready for the counter-attack on the captured trench. They had to work their way by a communication trench through a wood that was being

tumult, only 12 men could be found to follow him. He ran forward, pointing the way with his arm, bidding his servant to keep close up with him. He was hit by a bullet in the neck. He fell: gave a smile to his servant, Nash, who tried to stem the gush of arterial blood, and rolled forward on his face. He was dead. Other bullets struck him, and one went through his heart. Nash was twice wounded himself, and was forced to leave him lying there. The body had to lie there where it had fallen. Only, his brother (Neville) could not endure to let it lie unhonoured or unblessed. After a day and a half of anxious searching for exact details he got to the nearest

trench by the 'murdered' wood, which the shells had now smashed to pieces. Creeping out of the far end of the trench as dusk fell he crawled through the grass on hands and knees, in spite of shells and snipers, dropping flat on the ground as the flares shot up from the German trenches. And at last, 30 yards away in the open, he felt that he was touching young Woodroffe's body, another subaltern, and knew that he was close on what he sought. Two yards further he found it."

A week later, the Rev. Neville Talbot—serving as a chaplain with the New Army—went out again, this time with three soldiers from a Yorkshire regiment, and recovered his brother's body, to bury it in a quiet cemetery under a simple wooden cross. The Woodroffe referred to, it need hardly be added, was the second lieutenant who had lost his life in winning the V.C. On the day following his heroic death another officer of the 8th Rifle Brigade, Temporary Captain A. C. Sheepshanks, won the D.S.O. for conspicuous gallantry in a further counter-attack, when he continued to advance with his company until only he and six riflemen were left standing. Even with this isolated handful he succeeded in checking a bomb attack by the enemy, and holding on to his trench till late in the evening. "He was wounded in the head early in the day", adds the *Gazette*, "but returned to duty with his company after the wound had been dressed." Some of the lost ground was recovered in the course of repeated counter-attacks during this and the following day, and the supporting troops held on with a grim tenacity which prevented any attempt

on the enemy's part to increase his ill-gotten gains. Private F. Hamilton, of the same battalion, showed how the men of the New Army could fight, when he won the D.C.M. in this engagement. His own gun was knocked out, but he mounted another, the detachment of which had been disabled, and fired it at the enemy attacking in the rear. When the water failed he filled the water-jacket of the gun from the men's bottles and kept the gun in action, finally stopping an enemy's bombing-attack with his fire. Similar deeds were performed—and were similarly decorated—by Sergeants E. Wood and E. Chappell, both of the 7th King's Royal Rifles, the first helping to bring in a wounded officer under heavy fire and subsequently trying his 'prentice hand at bomb-throwing with reckless courage, and the second displaying equal bravery and resource with the machine-gun section.

"When thrown off the emplacement by a shell explosion," records the *Gazette*, "he continued to work his machine-gun till the tripod was damaged. He then laid the gun on the parados, and kept up the fire until the gun itself was rendered useless. Subsequently he directed the other machine-guns in the trenches, working one himself."

Two privates of the 8th King's Royal Rifles, F. D. Bentley and W. A. Melvin, won the same decoration for remaining with their machine-gun in their trench after the infantry had been withdrawn, and the machine-gun detachment had suffered heavy casualties, working the gun with dogged courage through a heavy bombardment and night attack, although there was practically no cover for it.

One well-merited Military Cross was awarded to Temporary Captain John Wormald, of the 7th King's Royal Rifles, for the splendid defence which he put up throughout the 30th, holding part of his trench all day against the enemy's unceasing attack, and finally recapturing all except some 30 yards of it. The Germans were thus prevented from turning the position, although the parapet and parados were destroyed and subject to fire from front, flank, and rear. For the greater part of the day Captain Wormald was the sole surviving officer present, all the remainder having been killed; but he continued to hold on, only retiring at length by order.

These repeated counter-attacks and stubborn defences of broken positions, magnificent as they were as proofs of British valour, were too costly and too isolated to win back the lost section of trenches, and a new line was consolidated a short distance farther back, preparatory to an assault on a more formidable scale.

The German advance had again given them possession of the ruined château and stables of Hooqe, which had changed hands so often before, as well as a threatening salient, roughly in diagonal formation, stretching beyond the Menin Road to the Sanctuary and Zouave Woods. Mean-time attacks were made by the enemy west of Bellewaarde Lake, near which we had established ourselves in re-trenched lines after the gas attack on May 24. The days which preceded the engagement of August 9, when the lost trenches were brilliantly recovered, with interest, were marked

by a vast expenditure of ammunition on both sides. "In these artillery exchanges", reported Sir John French, "the advantage has been with us"; but the effect on some of our trenches may be judged from the official account of how Captain Hugh B. Brown, of the 1st Leicestershire Regiment, won the D.S.O. at Hooqe when in charge of a brigade bombing-party between August 2 and 5:

"He got his party up to the trenches by day under shell-fire, and remained in them three days during a heavy bombardment. All his bombs were exploded by shell-fire, and his party was several times buried and had to be dug out."

These mishaps and losses, however, were amply avenged on August 9, when the 6th Division recaptured not only the whole of the lost British positions, but, in addition, some 400 yards of German trench north of the Menin Road. The success was the more gratifying because it proved that the lessons of past disappointments had not been learned in vain. It was preceded by the concentration of such a force of British artillery, assisted by two batteries lent by the 36th French corps, as could not fail to convince the Germans that, powerful as theirs might be—and undoubtedly was—ours was better still; and the co-operation with the infantry throughout was described as perfect. "Everything went like clockwork," wrote one correspondent; and when the infantry advanced up the shell-swept ridge at a certain minute in the small hours of August 9, while our guns lengthened their fuses, and carried the barrier of fire into the enemy's reserve trenches, they found



practically all the German defences shattered to pieces and the Germans themselves—those of them at least who had survived the relentless flow of shells in the preliminary bombardment—readier to take to their heels than to face the business end of a bayonet. Some stayed, fighting doggedly to the end, and the first quarter of an hour of hand-to-hand work with fists and cold steel will scarcely bear writing about. Three officers—all wearing the Iron Cross—and 124 other ranks were captured, together with two machine-guns. Most of the prisoners were taken in the crater of the mine exploded in July, when we had seized 150 yards of these very trenches, since won back by the Germans with the aid of their flame projectors. Here the grim struggle for the mastery in the small hours of this Monday morning, August 9, 1915, baffles description. One account—by Reuter's correspondent—depicts the crater during the thick of the fight, with our men chasing the Germans up and down the crumbling sides, their voices ringing loud above the din of the shells as they called upon their quarry to "give us a chance for a shot". The crater itself was fully 50 feet deep in places, with a width ranging up to as much as 50 yards. On recapturing the position the Germans had used it as a ready-made shelter for reserves, as one of our officers—Lieutenant Laurence E. Booth, 110th Battery, Royal Field Artillery—found to his astonishment on entering the place to observe fire during the attack, when a German officer and fifty men surrendered to

him. This is vouched for by the official record in the *Gazette* of Lieutenant Booth's Military Cross for conduct described as being "remarkable for cool and devoted bravery throughout the day". While flag-signalling, Lieutenant Booth was twice knocked over by shell-fire, and his coat torn by fragments of shell, but he continued to observe.

It was a day in which the honours fell to the guns and the junior officers and men. Where many units distinguished themselves it is perhaps invidious to single out one for special mention, but it is impossible to record this episode in the epic of Hooge without emphasizing the part played by the magnificent battalion to whom fell the honour of assaulting the centre of the position about the crater across the Menin road, close to the ruins of the château. The 500 yards which lay between them and the crater was on rising ground, crossed and recrossed by shattered trenches of previous positions, ploughed into holes by shell-fire, encumbered with dead bodies as grisly reminders of earlier fights, sown with barbed-wire entanglements, and commanded by machine-gun fire from German strongholds. Without the preliminary bombardment and the continued protection of the guns it was impossible that any man could have covered that journey and lived. The battalion made sure of its ground in the dark, before the moment came to charge, by deliberately working its way to the very edge of its own protecting curtain of fire, risking annihilation in the event of the slightest mistake on the part of our gunners.



Drawn by Christopher Clark

Holding On: the Ordeal of a German Bombardment by Night

Thus, when the curtain was suddenly lifted, the men were well within striking distance of the enemy's positions, and the rest, for the time being, was comparatively easy, thanks in no small measure to the battalion's bombing-parties, who accounted for most of the Germans still holding out. It was while commanding these bombing-parties that Temporary Second-Lieutenant Kenneth Storey, of the 2nd Durham Light Infantry—the awards for Hooge now permitting us to mention this gallant battalion by name—won the Military Cross. "The success of our attack, and the subsequent holding of the position," it is therein acknowledged, "was largely due to the coolness and dash of the battalion bomb-throwers under Second-Lieutenant Storey", who was wounded while directing his men. In the long hours of endurance which followed, when the Germans in revenge turned all their available guns on what was becoming little less than a shambles, these men from Durham, miners and others who are the very salt of the earth in the hour of danger, held on in the face of fearful losses. Twelve of their officers were killed or wounded before they were finally relieved. It is recorded that when at nightfall the order was sent for them to withdraw, the advanced section of the battalion did not receive it, some 200 men, with four of the surviving officers, clinging throughout the night to the ridge between the crater and the stables, where the struggle raged as furiously as anywhere. Nothing shows the spirit of this battalion better than the simple official record of the con-

duct of Lieutenant Gerald Sopwith, one of the four officers of the 2nd Durham Light Infantry to be decorated with the Military Cross for this fine feat of arms:

"Although blown several yards by a large shell, wounded in the shoulder and slightly in the leg, he refused to leave the firing-line, taking command of his company when the commander had been badly wounded and another officer killed. At a critical moment he left the trenches under heavy fire, rallied and led back some men who were retiring owing to a misunderstanding. At 5 a.m., August 10, he was again wounded, and his jaw broken. He had to lie down, but continued to command and encourage his men till he was relieved."

Lieutenant Sopwith's two other brother officers to receive the Military Cross for their coolness and fine example throughout this action were Second-Lieutenant Leonard Scott Briggs and Second-Lieutenant George Ivan Wiehe.

Of the D.C.M.'s awarded for this action seven at least fell to the share of the non-commissioned officers and men of the same Durham Light Infantry. The longest ordeal of all fell to Lance-Corporal J. G. Smith, who was posted with a handful of men in the recaptured ruins of the stables on the extreme right of the line, and could not be reached when at last the order came to withdraw. By midday on the 10th all other troops in the vicinity had retired, but Smith collected about twenty-four men and still held on under continuous bombardment until 7.30 p.m., declining to yield, merely sending back, long after his party had been given up for lost, for more bombs and

reinforcements, and only withdrawing when other troops relieved him. For their share in this heroic episode the D.C.M. was awarded not only to Lance-Corporal Smith, but also to Corporal J. Gott and Private R. D. Howse, both of whom, though receiving permission to withdraw, refused to quit their post of danger till relieved. Other D.C.M.'s were won by Lance-Corporal O. Manley, Sergeant J. Gibbens, and Private H. Hirst, all of the same battalion, for various deeds of dogged courage in the course of the engagement, Company Sergeant-Major C. Kent earning the rarer distinction of a clasp to the same medal won by him for conspicuous gallantry in an earlier action in the war.

Near at hand the 1st Battalion King's (Shropshire Light Infantry) was similarly distinguishing itself in critical circumstances, the Germans having blown in its captured trenches, leaving a dangerous gap in that part of the line. Thereupon Second-Lieutenant Richard H. Marriott, on his own initiative, collected a few men and a machine-gun, and, though twice wounded, held this vital section of the line under incessant shell-fire till dark, when he was reinforced and relieved. For this he received the Military Cross, also awarded to Lieutenant Richard Bryans, of the same battalion, who led one of the assaulting companies, and though slightly wounded stuck to his command throughout.

"He displayed great coolness and resource," states the *Gazette*, "and inspired his men with confidence under critical circumstances, commanding the front line with great discretion, and sending to head-

quarters concise and clear messages as to the situation."

Another well-merited Military Cross fell to Temporary Lieutenant Thomas L. Ingram, attached to the Shropshire Light Infantry from the Royal Army Medical Corps, who, with self-sacrificing devotion evacuated the wounded from the captured and bombarded trenches almost without cessation through the entire night of the 9th and 10th. "His indomitable energy and resource", to quote from the official account, "were the means of saving the lives of many severely wounded officers and men." The Shropshire Light Infantry were in sore need of all the help of this sort then available. In that assault and the long trial of endurance under the bombardment which followed, when the infuriated Germans flung every kind of shell and bomb to prevent the victors from making good their gains, they lost some eighteen officers alone. All ranks suffered and endured with the same devotion to duty, some half a dozen D.C.M.'s falling to the share of the 1st Shropshire Light Infantry. One of the recipients, Private H. Langford, saved what might have been a very serious situation by his magnificent bravery and absolute contempt for danger. In the confusion of the first onslaught a party of about twenty Germans had been overlooked in a sap behind our new lines, and thence began heavily to bombard our men from the rear. Private Langford at once collected all the bombs he could find, and, standing fearlessly on the top of the parapet, bombed the



enemy until they had all been killed or captured. Another of the recipients was Company Sergeant-Major W. Hodgkinson, who, in the perilous work of searching the dug-outs, himself killed three German officers who refused to surrender, and displayed the utmost bravery and resource during the whole time his company was in action. Corporal J. Groom won his D.C.M. while reinforcing the captured trenches with a machine-gun. His first attempt was foiled by the enemy's shells, which damaged the gun and wounded several of the gun team. Although wounded himself, he bound up his comrades' wounds, returned to head-quarters to report, and, nothing daunted, successfully took another gun and team to the firing-line. Similar dangers had to be faced in carrying up supplies, the communication-trench having been blown in the greater part of the way, forcing the men to advance over open ground in the face of terrific and continuous fire. Private W. Cheetham won his D.C.M. in this work, carrying up fresh supplies of bombs to his Shropshire comrades in the crater during the whole of the day. Then there were Private Knight, who earned the same decoration for his gallantry and initiative in reconnoitring portions of the position when first reached, and rendering great assistance to his officers in organizing the section of the line captured; and Corporal T. Turner, mentioned for courage and good work consistently displayed throughout the campaign, and similarly decorated for carrying in wounded comrades on two occasions in the present engagement under a murderous shell- and rifle-fire.

In the noble work of rescuing the wounded in other parts of the line none displayed greater heroism than Captain Kingsmill W. Jones, M.D., attached to the 1st Buffs from the Special Reserve of the Royal Army Medical Corps, who, practically for forty-eight hours on end, attended to the wounded in the front trenches, time after time exposing himself to shell- and rifle-fire during the removal of the casualties. Though twice slightly wounded, he stuck to his task with unflagging energy. "It was entirely owing to Captain Jones", says the *Gazette* in recording his award of the Distinguished Service Order, "that the crater was successfully evacuated of wounded." Two D.S.O.'s fell to the 2nd Battalion York and Lancaster Regiment, one to Brevet-Major George McDonald Pratt, for his gallant example in the attack, when "he was first into the enemy's position and rendered his commanding officer great assistance in the front-line fighting"; and the other to Captain Harold Payne Philby, who had been noted for consistent good service throughout the campaign, and on this occasion further distinguished himself by consummate coolness and energy in frequently visiting all portions of the firing-line under heavy shell-fire and personally supervising the dispatch of reinforcements and the like. The bravery of all ranks of this fine battalion was further testified by the number of D.C.M.'s subsequently showered upon it for its share in the fight. Two were won in defending the left flank of the position in the critical hours of the 9th, when the post was continually threatened by

German bombers, the recipients being Lance-Corporal J. Rye, who was in charge of the bombers at this point, and kept the enemy back by bomb-throwing until he was so severely wounded that he had to be taken away; and Private E. Barratt, who



In the Enemy's Trenches: a German hyposcope (disguised) and field-glass combined

stood at his post throwing bombs for six hours, until he, too, fell wounded, after displaying "great courage and resource throughout the battle". When the supply of bombs was becoming dangerously short Lance-Corporal J. Webb ran through the tornado of shells across the open ground and brought up fresh supplies on three separate occasions, in the last of which he was wounded. He, too, had earned

the D.C.M., like Sergeant T. Briggs of the same battalion, who organized the bombing-parties and, when most of the bombers had been put out of action, himself threw bombs, though he had no previous experience of the kind, and so continued to keep the enemy at bay. "By his bravery and resource", records the *Gazette*, "he was of the greatest assistance to his company commander throughout the action." Private E. Moseley also rendered the utmost help, winning his D.C.M. for continually facing death in the open to repair broken telephone wires, thus keeping up communication for his company during the whole day. Even the band shared in the honours won by the 2nd York and Lancaster Regiment on this strenuous occasion, both Bandsman G. E. Thew, who, acting as a stretcher-bearer, brought into safety several men who fell wounded in the advance, and afterwards did splendid work tending the wounded in the trenches; and Drummer G. Ratcliffe, who continually took messages across the open under heavy shell and machine-gun fire, winning the D.C.M. "Drummer Ratcliffe", adds the *Gazette*, "never failed to deliver a message, and throughout the campaign has done excellent work as a messenger." Another drummer to win the D.C.M. on the same occasion was Drummer C. Bentley, of the 2nd Sherwood Foresters (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment), who distinguished himself not only in carrying messages under the heaviest fire, but also in laying and repairing telephone wires. "His devotion to duty and bravery were most marked." Some of the severest gruelling after

the triumphant attack was experienced by the 2nd Sherwood Foresters, who lost almost as heavily as the Shropshires, some fourteen of their officers being numbered among the killed and wounded. Their well-earned share in the subsequent honours included two Military Crosses, one to Lieutenant (temporary Captain) Reginald D. Crosby, attached to the Sherwood Foresters from the 1st Lincolnshires, for holding his trench "under exceptionally heavy shell-fire for nearly twenty-four hours in spite of very heavy casualties"; and the other to Second-Lieutenant Aubyn S. Edwards, who faced the same ordeal all day, "and continued to organize the defence of his trench until it was completely blown in, encouraging his men and keeping them together by his cool behaviour". Other D.C.M.'s awarded to the non-commissioned officers and men of the 2nd Sherwood Foresters, in addition to Drummer Bentley's decoration, fell to Sergeant G. Kidman, who had charge of a bombing-party in the attack and fought with the utmost gallantry until wounded by a shell; Private C. Ray, who mounted and worked one of the captured German machine-guns under fire, and subsequently carried messages backwards and forwards across the shell-swept ridge; Private Jones, who distinguished himself in the same hazardous work; and Private R. Biggins, who led two other men in a bombing-attack on one of the enemy's positions, which they captured and held until relieved at 2.30 p.m. on the following day.

Two Military Crosses were won by officers of the 1st East Yorkshires—

Captain Alfred E. C. C. de Lafontaine, whose cool and devoted bravery saved the situation in a critical moment of the attack, and Second-Lieutenant Cyril J. Huntriss, who, acting as battalion grenadier officer, led four bomb-



Belgium's youngest Soldier: Prince Leopold, King Albert's eldest son and heir, as a private at the Front

Prince Leopold, Duke of Brabant, was enrolled as a private of the 12th Regiment of the Belgian Infantry of the Line in the spring of 1915 on the sand dunes still held by the Belgian army against the invading Germans. He was fourteen years old at the time.

ing-parties up to the assault on the enemy's position with the greatest coolness and daring. Lance-Corporal R. Pearce, who was in charge of the East Yorkshire's bombing-party which cleared the communication-trench and reached the crater, received the D.C.M., which was also awarded to Sergeant



H. Jameson, Corporal G. Desborough, and Corporal J. Beatson, all of whom behaved with outstanding courage and ability either in the bombing work or the repairing of telephone wires under fire.

All through the incessant bombardment concentrated on their lost positions by the German artillery throughout that memorable Monday, herculean efforts were made by the British troops to dig themselves in and consolidate the shapeless chaos into which the trenches had already been churned by our own shells. A counter-attack was expected at any moment, and only the supremacy asserted by our guns prevented this during the day, one feeble infantry attack during the ensuing night being easily repulsed. While, however, our own shells and the bombers kept the German infantry at a respectful distance throughout the hours of daylight, the massed fire of the German guns not only made consolidation extremely difficult and hazardous, but also rendered the dispatch of supplies and reinforcements across the captured salient a matter of the gravest danger. It was courting death to cross any part of that awful fire zone, yet volunteers were always ready to face the danger when messages had to be carried backwards or forwards or fresh supplies of bombs were needed on the captured ridge. Some of the most gallant deeds were done by the Engineers, who, among other things, faced this appalling cannonade in daylight to fix wire entanglements in front of part of the captured trenches. It was for this and other fine work that the D.S.O. was won by

Captain Geoffrey Turner, R.E., who, after leading two sections and six blocking parties of his company through the first line under heavy artillery and machine-gun fire, immediately stepped into the open and put out barbed wire with the utmost coolness. Nor was this all. "When the senior infantry officers were killed or wounded," adds the *Gazette*, "Captain Turner assumed command of the whole party in his vicinity and proceeded to consolidate the position, continuing to do so after being wounded till incapacitated by loss of blood." Then there was the Military Cross awarded to Lieutenant John Philip Palmes, attached to the 1st (from the 3rd) Battalion Prince of Wales's Own (West Yorkshire Regiment), for his gallantry in charge of another wiring-party which came under furious artillery-fire while working in the open, "and, by his coolness and fine example, encouraged the men and enabled the work to continue". It was in the same spirit and in the same devoted battalion that Lance-Corporals H. Anstead and G. Harrison won the D.C.M. on the following day for volunteering to proceed in broad daylight to one of the captured advanced posts, which it was imperative to hold, "well knowing they had to cross over open ground exposed to heavy shell-fire, and that their post was in the air, with both flanks exposed". Several men were killed or wounded in that desperate but successful venture. Another non-commissioned officer of the 1st West Yorkshires was similarly decorated for heroism—not for the first time dis-





Photo. by S. d. A

The National Heroes of France and Belgium: a meeting at the Front between General Joffre  
(on the left) and King Albert

played in the same campaign—while in charge of a party of stretcher-bearers who were out searching for wounded in exposed ground in front of the lines throughout the night of August 9 to 10.

"The situation was quite unknown at the time," states the *Gazette*, "and heavy shelling was in progress, but Sergeant Burke continued to lead and direct his party until daylight, and through his efforts many wounded were found and brought in."

Nor must we omit the Military Crosses awarded to Lieutenant William S. Ironside, of the 112th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, for distinguished conduct both on the 9th and five days later, when his courage and grasp of a dangerous situation "undoubtedly saved many lives"; and Temporary Second Lieutenant Francis R. Watson, for excellent work in the attack on the Monday while commanding the 38th Trench Howitzer Battery of the Royal Artillery, when he moved up to the captured position, bombarded the trenches from which the enemy's bombers began to appear, and located and knocked out a machine-gun in a house on the right flank.

From subsequent accounts out of the mouths of men who did and saw, and from these official if belated tributes to those who honoured their regiments in winning honours for themselves, it is possible to form something like a mental picture of the grim battlefield of Hooge, with the victors hanging on for dear life to the litter of battered earthworks which constituted their new positions, the air quivering all the time with the duel of massed artillery, and the ground shaking with

the bursting shells. As a result of the artillery duel the section of captured trenches in the open ground south of Hooge became untenable by either side, and the position of our new line south of the village was slightly withdrawn; but this made no material difference to our gains. We had not only won back all that we wanted of our old line, thus removing the enemy's menacing position there, but had also strengthened it by the additional slice of his trench north of the Menin road. Some 500 German dead were counted on the battlefield at the end of the engagement, the enemy's total losses being estimated at about 3000 men. The best acknowledgment of his defeat was the fact that he made no serious attempt at a counter-attack with his infantry, the terrific intensity of his artillery reply gradually subsiding to occasional bombardment and isolated bombing-attacks, which were easily repulsed, our troops in the meantime having thoroughly consolidated their hard-earned gains.

Comparative quietude thus settled down over this war-scarred region, as over the rest of the British front. For the remainder of the month Sir John French had no important operations to report, the only incident of note being intermittent artillery engagements of no tactical significance, isolated bombing and mining activity, and aerial attacks over the German lines. The army was marking time preparatory to the Allied offensive towards the end of the following month, steadily increasing in numerical strength, and building up its reserves

of ammunition for the great attack. The period of waiting was not without its splendid episodes of British valour, for war, though subdued for the time to local efforts of minor importance, raged unceasingly and remorselessly between the two opposing lines, each seizing the slightest oppor-

bomb landed on the side of the parapet, threatening instant destruction to a party of Scots Guardsmen who were working close by.

"He might easily have stepped back a few yards round the corner into perfect safety," records the *Gazette*, "but, shouting to the men to look out, he rushed at the bomb, seized it, and hurled it over the parapet, where it at once exploded. There is no doubt that this splendid combination of presence of mind and courage saved the lives of many of the working-party."



Second-Lieutenant G. A. Boyd-Rochfort, V.C.  
(From a photograph by Ball, London)

tunity to improve its position or add to the enemy's casualty list. It was in the course of this cold-blooded warfare that Second-Lieutenant G. A. Boyd-Rochfort, Special Reserve, 1st Battalion, Scots Guards, won the Victoria Cross, on August 3, "for most conspicuous bravery in the trenches between Cambria and La Bassée". This gallant officer was standing in the communication-trench at 2 a.m. when a German mortar

Not many weeks later Lieutenant Boyd-Rochfort, V.C., was wounded in the trenches in a dramatic encounter with two Germans, whom he attacked single-handed. One he knocked down with the butt-end of his loaded revolver, and the other with his fist.

Justice, unfortunately, can never be done to all the isolated acts of heroism which glorify the dull record of this ruthless and otherwise uneventful phase of the summer campaign on the Western front. One thrilling incident which must not be overlooked, however, stands to the credit of Lord Strathcona's "Horse". A magazine in a farm occupied by the troops near Messines, containing a large supply of small-arm ammunition and many bombs and grenades, was set on fire by the enemy's shells. Several of the bombs and grenades caught fire, and one of the ammunition-boxes started burning, with the result that cartridges began exploding in all directions. Major James A. Hesketh, of Strathcona's Horse, fully realizing the danger, left his dug-out, and, together with Squadron Sergeant-Major G. S.



Collins, of the same famous regiment, entered the farm under continuous shell-fire, and with the utmost coolness and bravery extinguished the fire and removed all the ammunition. For this splendid act, which saved the reserve ammunition from destruction, Major Hesketh received the D.S.O. and Sergeant-Major Collins the D.C.M. The

*Gazette* bears witness to numerous other deeds of equal daring—of thrilling duels in the air, dashing exploits by bombing-parties of the Leicesters and Irish Guards, and heroic rescues by the 89th Punjabis; of gallant gunners, and sublime self-sacrifice by officers and men of the tunnelling companies of the Royal Engineers, when mines exploded, and working-parties were gassed underground; and of noble work on repeated occasions by heroes of the Royal Army Medical Corps. "Conditions generally have been normal," was the burden of most of the brief dispatches from the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, reporting with monotonous regularity that no change had occurred in the situation since his last *communiqué*; but normal conditions on the Western front in the summer of 1915 meant ceaseless activity in burrowing, bombing, and sniping, intermittent artillery fire at

all hours of the day and night, and an ever-lengthening Roll of Honour on both sides.

That part of the Belgian front held by King Albert's army, guarding the banks of the Yser to the sea, remained the quietest sector of the Western line throughout the summer campaign of 1915. The swamps and dykes



Belgium's "New" Army: some of the khaki-clad troops of King Albert's forces on one of the training-grounds behind the firing-line

which had played so large a part in saving this south-western corner of Flanders in the first German onrush proved more formidable than ever as the Belgians perfected their defences and steadily increased the strength of their forces. Belgium had its New Army as well as Britain. All refugees of eligible age who fled to these islands and elsewhere on the outbreak of the war were called to the colours, and, with countless other civilians who escaped over the Dutch border after the German occupation, were trained

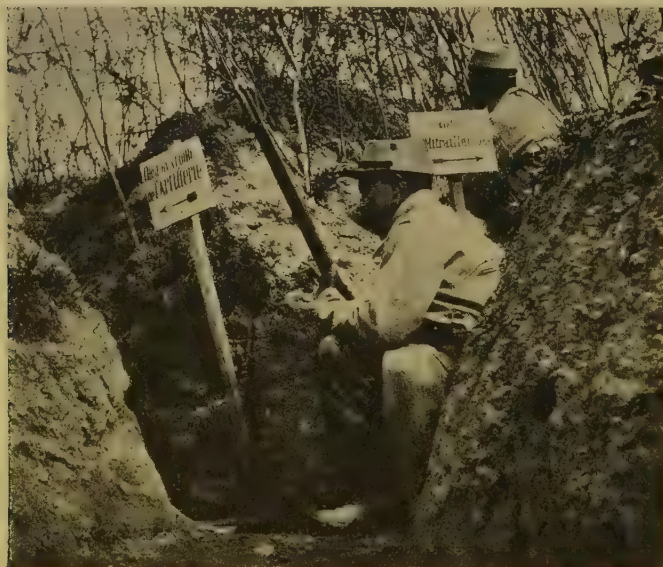


and equipped in the field behind the Belgian firing-line. Here were training-schools for soldiers of every description, the long lull in the fighting giving time for the General Staff to organize the new levies and gradually familiarize them with their duties. The Belgian troops were now clad in khaki, their uniforms so closely resembling the British—save that drab-coloured gaiters were substituted for puttees—that at a little distance it was not easy to distinguish the one from the other.

Over most of the flat fighting-ground which constituted the Belgian front the trenches on both sides hardly rose above the rank vegetable growth that covered the flats. Here, with water oozing close to the surface, it was impossible to dig the subterranean

passages and deep dug-outs which characterized the trenches elsewhere along the Western lines. This was possible farther to the rear, where more favourable ground enabled the Belgians to dig deeper, and provide more adequate protection against shell- and rifle-fire; but in the firing-line itself it was only by constant work, often in the face of heavy fire, that the necessary strength was maintained. They held their line with dogged and cheerful courage, repulsing every German attempt to gain a footing on the left bank of the Yser—several enemy attacks in this direction being made north of Dixmude—and replying with interest to the desultory bombardments and constant sniping from the German lines. When the British fleet

reappeared off the Belgian coast the heavy artillery in the Nieuport district acted in conjunction with it in fighting the enemy's coast batteries, which replied to the fire of the British ships. For the rest, the summer campaign in this corner of Belgium—to the left of the salient of Ypres—was comparatively uneventful, apart from combined British and French air raids on German military centres at Ostend and elsewhere. Ostend was also visited in a seaplane in



Photographic Service of the French Army

In the Advanced Trenches along the French Front: Snipers watching for a chance shot

The photograph was taken at the cross-roads of two communication-trenches, where sign-boards point to the artillery observation post and the machine-gun shelter



Photographic Service of the French Army

The Scene of one of Joffre's successful "nibbles" north of Arras: Barricade captured from the Germans at Neuville St. Vaast

August by Squadron - Commander Bigsworth, R.N., who, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, attacked a German submarine single-handed and destroyed it by bombs.

While the British and Belgian armies were thus holding their own with incessant vigilance, but without any offensive movement of vital importance, throughout the summer months, the French armies were strengthening their positions all along their vastly longer line, and in certain places making substantial progress. Their trenches, as Lord Kitchener told the House of Lords on September 15, had been so developed as to present everywhere a veritable network of almost impregnable fortifications.

"Of this", declared the British Minister "I have been able to satisfy myself during a visit which I was lately able to pay to our Allies at the invitation of General Joffre, when I was profoundly impressed with the high state of efficiency and the *moral* exhibited by the French army. It was evident that officers and men recognized that the only possible termination to the war is to inflict on the enemy a thorough defeat, and that their resolution to do this was never firmer or more intense."

The ceaseless toll of the enemy's fire was considerably reduced by the provision of steel helmets for the French troops in the trenches, these affording excellent protection for the head, especially against bursting shrapnel and glancing bullets. The French casques, closely resembling

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those worn by sappers of earlier days, were painted a grey colour, like the artillery, which rendered them practically invisible at a distance. Steel helmets of a somewhat similar pattern were also introduced about the same time in the British army.

One result of the arrival of the re-

French battle-line during the summer months of 1915 had varied from the Arras and Lens district to Argonne and the St. Mihiel salient, and thence to the Alsace and the Vosges Mountains. North of Arras the fluctuating struggle described in our last article on the French operations ended in



Photographic Service of the French Army

The War on the German Frontier: French troops on guard at the advance posts

inforcing British divisions of the New Army was that General Joffre was able to hand over to Sir John French some 17 miles of additional lines. This, however, still left them with over 500 miles of front to guard, from the British lines to the Alps. Sir John French's front had now grown to about 50 miles, the Belgians still extending some 18 miles from the sea.

The storm-centres of the long

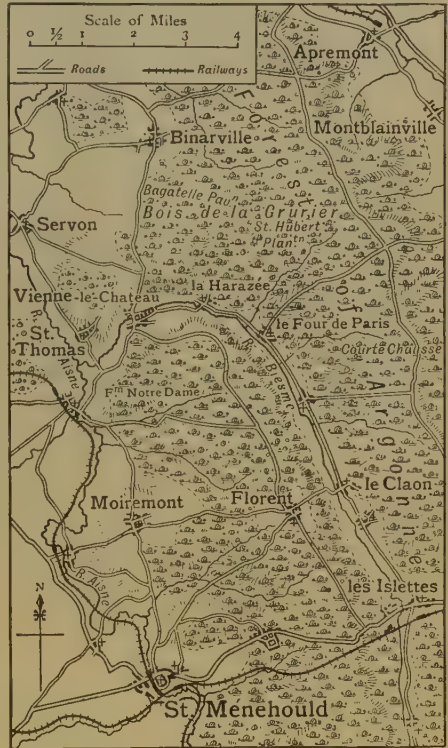
the capture by our Allies, early in June, of the whole of the heights of Notre Dame de Lorette, as well as a number of strongly fortified villages round that high ground, thereby securing, as Lord Kitchener pointed out, an area of great tactical importance in view of future operations. The struggle raged most fiercely through the summer months in the Souchez sector and the grim region



of "The Labyrinth" nearer Arras—so called from the amazing network of trenches, and what the French call "communication-bowels", which the Germans had dug between Ecurie and Roclincourt, in places at a depth of 50 or 60 feet. After weeks of underground burrowing, and fighting from trench to trench, the French succeeded in winning a way into this almost impregnable stronghold, where hand-to-hand fighting of the most ferocious description continued day and night.

In the depths of the Argonne Forest the German Crown Prince was noisily active throughout the summer with the army which was constantly threatening the fortified town of Verdun, the key to eastern France, without, however, making any appreciable progress. Violent and costly attacks were launched repeatedly, assisted by mines, bombs, air-torpedoes, asphyxiating gases, burning liquids, "lachrymatory" shells, causing a flood of tears among the troops wherever they fell, and every other device of modern warfare, but all the elaborate lists of captures and repeated shouts of triumph through the German Wireless Press left the enemy's lines very much where they were, a foothold here and there being balanced by similar gains of ground by the French in other parts of the forest. One prolonged attempt to pierce the French lines in the Argonne began on the Binarville-Vienne road on June 20, and continued intermittently until the middle of July, the battle-field gradually spreading along the western side of the forest to the Four de Paris, some

5 miles from the Binarville-Vienne road. More than once the first line of the defending army was forced momentarily to give way in places under a vast expenditure of high explosive and suffocating curtains of



The Scene of the German Crown Prince's Campaign in the Argonne Forest in the Summer of 1915

poisonous gas, but for the most part it was restored in the inevitable counter-attacks, the French on their part seizing every opportunity to take the initiative. The net result of this great offensive was claimed by the Germans as a series of brilliant tactical successes for the Crown Prince, a claim which the French commander, General



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Sarrail—subsequently appointed to the command in the Near East—stoutly denied, the truth being that, all told, the enemy had won a few hundred yards here and there at a prodigal cost in life and material. The French themselves claimed certain minor gains, and finally held the communications with Verdun as

securely as ever. Another violent assault with the same object in view was launched towards the middle of August, chiefly against the French lines between Vienne-le-Château and La Harazée, preceded by a bombardment in which it was estimated that at least 20,000 German shells were hurled against the defending trenches. The French troops faced this fire with unflinching bravery, and after what was officially described as "a very lively struggle" repulsed

three infantry attacks with staggering loss. The Germans claimed another notable victory, but their only gain of ground was insignificant, and was due to their use of asphyxiating gas, as notified in the French official communication of August 17 refuting the loud assertions of the German *communiqués*:

"Since August 8", it was stated, "the Germans have only attempted on the Western front a single new attack in the

Argonne. During the day of the 12th an immediate counter-attack left them in possession of only a very small element of our advanced trenches. This magnificent result, as in all other cases, is attributed to the employment of asphyxiating gas. In spite of their assertions, the Germans have not since gained any ground."

Yet another formidable attack was



Picturesque Reinforcements from the French Colonies: Algerians on the Western Front

made on September 8 and 9, again with the aid of asphyxiating gas, and strongly pressed with two divisions of infantry. At certain points between Vienne-le-Château and Le Four de Paris the enemy succeeded in gaining a footing in the French first-line trenches, but were hurled out in the furious counter-attack, the fighting lasting throughout the night and the ensuing day with fluctuating fortune. In the end the French not only main-

tained their line, save for a section of trench east of Binarville, but made a number of prisoners and captured a machine-gun.

On the other side of the great barrier fortress of Verdun the threatening German salient shown in our map on p. 286, Vol. II, still had its tip licking, as it were, the waters of the Meuse at St. Mihiel. The point of this remarkable "wedge" was allowed to remain because it could only be cut off at the price of losses out of all proportion to its value, the French effort after capturing Les Eparges in the early months of 1915, as already described, and, subsequently, the Ailly spur to the south east of St. Mihiel, being chiefly directed to pinching the more vulnerable sides of the salient and in carrying the war underground. It was not a method which made for much territorial progress. A few yards of blood-stained soil changed hands every now and then as the lines crept closer and closer, but there was no attempt at a general advance. It was just a war of wearing down.

"How was it," people asked, "that Verdun and the other great barrier fortresses of Toul and Belfort, on the eastern frontier of France, could successfully withstand the strain of attack when Liège, Namur, Maubeuge, Antwerp, Warsaw, Ivangorod, and others had all gone to prove the futility of permanent fortifications against such modern gunfire as the Germanic hosts had at their command?" Verdun, Toul, and Belfort remained as solid arguments for those who still pinned their faith to fortresses, granted, of course, that they

be suitably situated and that due precautions be taken to guard against the heaviest artillery that can be brought against them, with an adequate system of trenches and earthworks far in advance of the fortifications themselves. Alone, the stoutest fortress must succumb to the modern siege gun, but earthworks can be made practically impregnable. Mr. G. H. Perris made the matter clear in a graphic account in the *Daily Chronicle* of his visit to Verdun and the Heights of the Meuse during the summer campaign of 1915. Verdun, like its sister strongholds, succeeded—where other forts had signally failed—in keeping the enemy at a safe distance, for three reasons: there was here complete preparation, including sufficient numbers of men and guns; the danger had been better understood from the first and guarded against in time; and the mountain barriers of Lorraine and Alsace favoured these measures.

"The strength of Verdun rests in the successive circles of hills amid which the town nestles. You can trace four successive systems of fortification, corresponding to the extending range of artillery. At the centre, dominating and encircling the civil population, which is little more than 20,000 in time of peace, and now perhaps half that number, is the old citadel, with walls, ditch, and towering gateways, of the time of Vauban and Le Roi Soleil. Just beyond these are the remains of the forts which the Revolutionists held for only a few hours in 1792, and which were defended more gallantly for three weeks in 1870. Further afield there is the series of modern forts shown upon the military maps, which have practically never been in action during the present war, and are little more than storehouses and centres of organization."

Thus four lines of defence stretched in a crescent of some 40 miles from before Montfaucon — to which the German Crown Prince retired in his precipitous flight after the Battle of the Marne—round to Les Eparges, on the edge of the St. Mihiel salient. Within these four lines of defence lies a countryside the summer beauty of which even the horrors of war had failed to ruin.

"It is too large a space to be crowded, even by a great army;" wrote Mr. Perris in the article already quoted, "and you may look over miles of shimmering rye and fields of pasture or stacked corn; you may trace the winding course of the great chalk roads or of the idly flowing Meuse from hill to swelling hill, and yet no reminder of the war save a boom of distant guns. But the fields have been ploughed and sowed and reaped by old men and women and children; and now the villages are all turned into encampments. There are cavalry who carry bayonets, and know more now of the trench than the stable. It is a masculine world; we never saw more than half a dozen women in a village. The big hooded carts and wagons of the commissariat and ordnance come and go unceasingly. It is a quiet time on the eastern frontier, and this vast business behind the lines goes on amid a strange calm."

The signs of war were often more apparent overhead, for the French air squadrons were particularly active in this district, the rear of the Crown Prince's army, where his seemingly inexhaustible supply of asphyxiating shells were stored, being a favourite object of attack. These French air squadrons played an increasingly large share in the summer war on the Western front, for it was now realized

that for fighting purposes it was better to attack in swarms than in isolated units. As many as thirty or forty machines would be seen in flight together, each squadron with its complement of chaser-planes, bomb-planes, and gun-planes, the duty of the chaser-planes being to act as destroyers in the case of any attempt at interference on the part of German aircraft with the operations of the other craft. In this way the enemy's communications were constantly harassed and much material damage was done to points of strategic importance behind his lines. All the railway centres for the German armies operating against Verdun were regularly bombarded, and the destruction wrought thereby must have seriously handicapped their plans. Towards the middle of July one such squadron, composed of thirty-five machines, despite a wind blowing at the rate of 40 miles an hour, flew across the St. Mihiel salient and dropped bombs on the military railway installed by the Germans at Vigneulles les Hattonchatel (south-east of Les Eparges). This station was the centre for the south-eastern armies operating against Verdun, and essential supplies of every description, but especially munitions, were known to be concentrated there. Though vigorously shelled by the Germans, the aerial squadron sailed over its objective and, dropping 171 90-mm. (about 3½ in.) bombs, caused several outbreaks of fire, and must have destroyed an immense amount of stores. Its daring mission achieved, the squadron swerved round, and every machine made good its escape.





"The Most Rapid Marchers in Europe": French infantrymen in their new "tricolour grey" uniform

The French infantrymen, long reputed to be the most rapid marchers in Europe, are here shown on their way to the firing-line, with their long coats buttoned back to give freedom of movement to their legs. Their "tricolour grey" uniforms replaced for war purposes their more familiar and more conspicuous blue coats and red trousers. Patriotic sentiment was satisfied with a blending of red, white, and blue strands, producing a grey cloth which, at a distance, was practically invisible



On the rest of the French front, to quote from an official statement of the situation issued in Paris during August, the defending troops "preserved their ascendancy over the enemy in daily artillery duels and fighting at close quarters with bombs and grenades". The struggle was especially violent in the third storm-centre of the summer campaign in this theatre—in the Vosges, where our Allies were steadily tightening their grip on the reconquered region of Alsace. Here, having made good their hold on the southern borderland, and consolidated their position on the Hartmannsweilerkopf—the scene of continuous fighting for many months in the fresh advance towards Mulhouse and the Rhine—they pushed through the group of hamlets to the north, known as the Ban de Sapt, and, lower down, advanced slope by slope towards the manufacturing town of Münster, gradually enveloping it on the south, west, and north. The smart capture of Braunkopf, and a series of other minor successes during the summer months in the Münster district, won for them dominating positions on the heights of the Lingekopf-Schratzmännle-Barrenkopf ridgeway, bringing them within 2 miles of the town on the north, and making them masters of the southern valley of the Fecht on the south by the possession of the industrial villages of Metzeral and Sondernach.

The Alpinists and mountaineers from Savoy and the Dauphiné, as well as the battalions of the line assisting in the operations, rivalled one another in daring and self-sacrifice

in winning back these long-lost hills and valleys of Alsace. One heroic exploit of a company of the 7th Battalion of Chasseurs was the subject of an official *communiqué* at the beginning of July. These Chasseurs, some 140 strong, with 5 officers, were cut off on one of the heights they had captured on the Hilsenfirst, or Hilgenfirst, Range, which constitutes the approach to the valley of Gebweiler, on the eastern branch of the Fecht. About 20 per cent were already wounded when the Germans, by a cunning ruse, completely encircled them. Next day the enemy attempted to storm the summit in columns four deep. The Chasseurs fought like lions, but their position was becoming critical when help came in the nick of time from the rear in the shape of one of the "incomparable 75's", which caught the attackers in its deadly fire and completely wiped out one of their columns. The survivors fled, but the enemy still held the Chasseurs in his power unless relieving troops could reach them in time; for they were perilously short of ammunition, and food and drink were nearly exhausted. For three days and nights they held on in the face of increasing privations—the wounded especially suffering severely—while unsuccessful efforts were made to relieve them by comrades of the same battalion. The surrounded Chasseurs managed to live on some German tinned meats which a daring patrol brought in after a night foray. On another occasion one of the officers, with a handful of men, made a similar expedition, surprising twenty Germans, of whom they killed or

wounded five, captured three, and put the remainder to flight. And early on the fourth day, when the whole company's ammunition was exhausted, they beat off another German attack by rolling huge rocks on the advanc-

army conferred on the company the title of the "Sidi Brahim"—a name illustrious in the annals of the French army.

Metzeral and Sondernach, nearer Münster, had fallen to the French before this moving episode, after mountainous fighting equally thrilling at times and as different as possible from the campaign at the other end of "Joffre's Wall" among the flat pastures of Flanders.

The triumphant advance along the Southern Fecht, which made the French masters of Metzeral and Sondernach, began on June 15, when, after a searching artillery-fire, the Alpine troops and battalions of the line swept down both sides of the valley at once. The Chasseurs sounded the charge with their bugle bands, whom they had brought with them, while the band of the line battalions which attacked Hill 830 played the "Marseillaise" with such vigour, as solemnly recorded by the French Eye-Witness, that the big drum was broken. Hill 830 was stormed in magnificent style, the infantry, carrying all before them, surging over the slopes in the rear and capturing two companies of the defending Germans. The Alpinists charged with the same impetuous dash. Nothing for a time could withstand an attack which had been as cleverly conceived as brilliantly executed. It was not long before most of the German trenches on the Braunkopf had fallen into French hands, though a set-back at Omlass, where the slopes of the Braunkopf were bristling with German machine-guns, held up the general advance on Metzeral. It



Photographic Service of the French Army

A Lull in the Fighting: French soldier writing a letter home in the doorway of his "dug-out"

ing troops, crushing so many to death that the attempt was abandoned. That was their last trial. The same night their comrades, with the help of artillery reinforcements, rushed to their rescue and relieved them, while the German lines were battered to ruins. In token of their gallant stand the General commanding the Vosges

took four days of ceaseless fighting finally to win this stubborn section of the enemy's line, the crowning effort being achieved by the Alpinists, who, charging through the wood which led

death-trap to the advancing Chasseurs, who succeeded in penetrating the wire entanglements only to be decimated by the fire of a flanking machine-gun. In vain the Chasseurs endeavoured to

dig themselves in with their tools, but not one responded when the Germans called to them to surrender. "The machine-gun", adds the French Eye-Witness, "completed its deadly work, the bodies of our heroes being afterwards found in the wood, lying in line as if on parade." With the final capture of all these outworks the French attacks were concentrated upon Metzeral in the valley. When the Germans realized their danger of being captured at Metzeral, on June 21, as the Chasseurs poured down the mountain-sides and reached the railway station, they fortified some of the houses with machine-guns, and after set-



Photographic Service of the French Army

In the Recaptured Slice of the Lost Provinces: Alsatian children in the hands of their new rulers

It was not long before the French soldiers won the hearts of the Alsatian children in the region recaptured from the Germans. The little girls in the photograph are wearing the typical Alsatian costume

to the heart of the enemy's defences, carried these by storm, and captured over 150 German officers and men.

Simultaneously an attack was directed against a threatening stronghold to the south of the wood. Unfortunately the position proved a

ting fire to the village prepared to evacuate it.

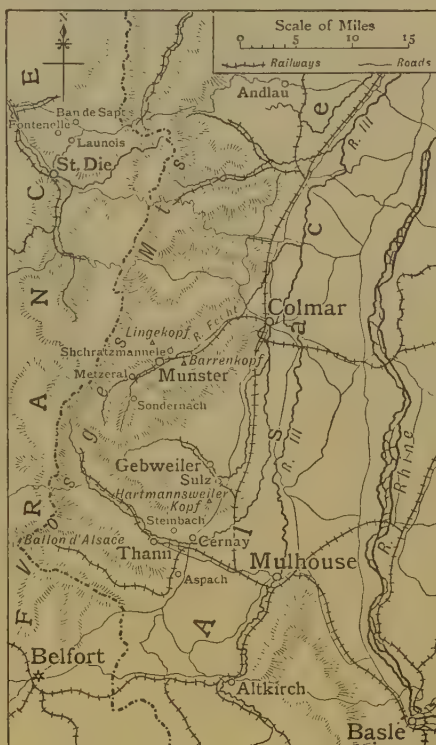
"Our artillery", wrote the French Eye-Witness at the time, "made short work of the fortified houses. The streets were in flames as our troops entered the village, some from the north, others from the west.



While the fight and the cannonade raged throughout the night of the 21st-22nd, Metzeral burned, while we followed up the retreating enemy through the orchards to the east, and on to the hills commanding the village. The capture of Metzeral involved the retreat by the Germans from the neighbouring woods and then from Sondernach, where we installed ourselves on the right bank of the Fecht. Thus we had obtained our objective, and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy, as we could tell from the number of bodies left on the field. We had also taken 20 officers, 53 non-commissioned officers, and 633 men prisoners."

While these small but significant successes were being won round Münster, similar progress was being made in the Ban de Sapt region of the Vosges, which lies some 20 miles away to the north. Fontenelle, one of these hamlets, was carried towards the end of July after months of vigorous warfare, in which vital positions repeatedly changed hands, as elsewhere along the Western front. One marked success in these preliminary operations—on July 8—led to the capture of all the German defensive works from the hill to the south-east of Fontenelle as far as the Launois road, as well as nearly 800 unwounded prisoners belonging to seven different battalions, with 19 officers, a 37-mm. gun, two machine-guns, several bombthrowers, and a great quantity of ammunition. The enemy's counterattacks were stopped by the curtain fire of the French artillery. This success was followed up on the night of July 24 with the storming of other powerful German defensive organizations from the Height of Fontenelle

(Hill 627) to the village of Launois, part of which was occupied by the victorious troops, who also took 836 further prisoners, including 11 officers and a machine-gun company, and much fresh material. One German



The Scene of the Summer Campaign in the Vosges Mountains and Southern Alsace

blockhouse held out by itself throughout the night, but on the following morning its garrison surrendered. Altogether 8 machine-guns were captured on this occasion, together with a large quantity of rifles, grenades, and cartridges. The end of this hot engagement left the village of Launois in divided possession, the French





The Campaign in the Vosges: French artillery-fire overwhelming the German trenches before the successful assault on the Braunkopf

making daily progress until they became masters of about half the place. Violent combats continued here as elsewhere throughout the confused and mountainous front in the Vosges, the French everywhere retaining the bulk of their hard-won positions through the rest of the summer. The German Wireless Press claimed at the close of August that the German troops had recaptured the Lingekopf-Barrenkopf range.

"In reality," declared the French official *communiqué* in reply to this, "after a very violent attack, and the employment of showers of asphyxiating bombs, they succeeded in nothing more than the recapture of a small portion of the trenches previously lost by them on the Lingekopf. Everywhere else the German counter-attacks were repulsed."

away without any considerable offensive on the French front, but with sufficient activity to pin the German armies down all along the line, and with a growing sense of superiority as the foemen before them showed signs of deterioration, and the means to victory behind them were steadily gathering in strength. For the first time since the call to arms the *poilus* were now granted a few days' furlough—four clear days at home for the most part, though in some cases the leave was extended to a week. It was the first holiday for twelve months for the veterans of August, 1914, and the joy which it brought to the army and those homes of France not ground beneath the iron heel of Germany may be better imagined than described. The reunion served but to strengthen the will and courage of

Thus the summer of 1915 passed

both the army and the people. War was a terrible necessity, but the most sacred things of France had been outraged, and the nation was more than ever determined to avenge that wrong.

Stoicism was as marked in the homes as in the trenches. The will to win was uppermost, none thinking of anything less than victory once and for all. Outside the invaded area there was little sign of abnormal poverty. The great national war loans were as eagerly taken up as in this country. Everywhere the women were doing the work of men as a matter of course. The French army was fed as regularly and excellently as the British, and thrived under the discipline and simplicity of military

life in the field. Apart from wounds there was little or no disease, the health of the troops as a whole being considerably better than in time of peace.

The whole nation indeed had thrown every ounce of its strength into the struggle. No labour troubles interfered with the national organization for war. Every possible factory and workshop had been extended or converted for the manufacture of munitions long before the summer of 1915, with the result that the supply at that period had increased by something like 600 per cent over the pre-war output. Compulsory military service simplified matters enormously. There was no need for the Government to take over the management of private concerns,



After the Capture of the Braunkopf Ridge: French Chasseurs in one of the German trenches turning the enemy's own weapons—quick-firing guns—on the retreating troops

After the capture of the Braunkopf ridge by the French troops on June 15, the Germans, who were fired on by their own machine-guns from the lost trenches, shelled the position with their artillery, but could not move the conquerors. The smoke shown in the illustration in the distance came from the village of Metzeral, which the Germans fired as they withdrew

where the workers, for the most part, were soldiers, and already subject to military law and discipline. The army itself, strengthened in numbers and made more efficient in all departments under the organizing genius of General Joffre, was stronger in every respect than before the war. Large classes hitherto exempt had been called to the colours, and the 1915 class had gone into training before the end of 1914—at least eight months before it would have been called up in normal times. With later classes similarly dealt with, the summer of 1915 found General Joffre with no lack

of reserves to keep his armies up to strength, notwithstanding the constant gaps that had to be filled along his own 500 odd miles of front in France, as well as in Gallipoli and elsewhere. Having, as stated in an earlier chapter, been purged of inefficient generals, the French armies were now led by men who had proved their mettle on the field of battle, and were themselves perfected in the same rigorous school. A close observer who had lived with them all the time described the spirit of these armies after the first year of struggle as one of calm, stern fortitude and absolute confidence. F. A. M.



Decorated on the Field of Battle: a French Colonel conferring the "Croix de Guerre" on a gallant soldier in the firing-line



## CHAPTER VI

## THE GREAT ADVENTURE IN GALLIPOLI

(August, 1915)

A Tragic Disappointment—Preparing for the Great Attempt—Why Anzac was chosen for the Main Attack—Sir Ian Hamilton's Plan—His Head-quarters during the Operations—An Unlucky Friday—The Holding Attack at Helles—Forestalling a Turkish Offensive—Gallant Lancastrians—Changes in the High Commands—Heroic Fight for the Vineyard—Results of the Helles Attack—Subsidiary Operations at Anzac—General Birdwood's Forces—Australian Glory at Lone Pine—How Seven V.C.'s were Won—The Frontal Assaults of the 2nd Australian Brigade and 8th Australian Light Horse—Heroes of Russell's Top—The Main Advance on the Sari Bair Ridge—Plan of Attack and Composition of the four Anzac Columns—The Night March—Immortal Exploits of Russell's Men—Johnston's Column within a quarter of a mile of Victory—Thirteenth Division of the New Army wins its Spurs—The Help from Suvla Bay that Failed—How Chunuk Bair was Won—Heroic Stand of the 7th Gloucesters—Losses of the 4th Australian Brigade—The Renewed Attack on August 9—Gurkhas and New Army Troops crown the Heights—Their Fleeting Triumph—Baldwin's Lost Column—The Crowning Disaster—Counting the Cost—The Suvla Bay Landing—Complete Surprise of the Turks—Root of our Failure—Absence of a Real Leader—Why Sir Ian Hamilton went to Suvla—Story of the Week's Operations—General Stopford Superseded.

IN war", wrote Lord Roberts on one occasion, "you cannot expect everything to come out right"; but the tragic failure of the Homeric struggle for the Dardanelles, the success of which would have solved most of our troubles in the Balkans in the summer of 1915, and thrown the capital of the Turkish Empire open to capture, was a cruel blow to the Allies' cause. "In the whole course of the war, with its ups and downs," declared Mr. Asquith in the House of Commons, three months after the Suvla Bay landing, "I have never sustained a keener disappointment than in the failure of this operation." The highest hopes had been built upon the triumph of this decisive effort to win a dominating position in the Peninsula. The chances of victory, as it seemed both to the Government and those on the spot, were, in the Prime Minister's words, not only great but preponderant, while the consequences of suc-

cess, if success had been attained, were almost immeasurable. We did not succeed; and the disappointment was the more acute because we came so near, in those fateful days of August, 1915, to snatching a crowning triumph, the fame of which would have resounded throughout the Eastern world as conclusive proof of the Allies' superiority. Like so many episodes in the Great War—and not on the Allies' side alone—this crucial operation, rightly conceived as it seems to us, was marred in the execution.

To pick up the threads of this tangled story it is necessary to hark back to Chapter XV in the last volume, where, after the desperate assaults and counter-assaults of early July, the campaign had again settled down into the murderous monotony of trench warfare, while the new and supreme effort was being planned for the ensuing month from Anzac and Suvla Bay. In an earlier dispatch Sir Ian



Hamilton referred to Anzac as being reluctantly cast to play second fiddle to Cape Helles—a rôle, as he said, entirely out of tune with the dare-devil spirit of our warriors from Australia and New Zealand. Now, however, these rôles were to be reversed. Time had enabled the Turks to make their southern defences—sufficiently formidable in their natural strength—practically impregnable. Even the capture of Krithia, for which such heavy sacrifices had already been made, would no longer give us in August the mountain barrier of Achi Baba, an entirely new system of defence works having been constructed by the Turks under German guidance upon its perilous slopes—works, as Sir Ian Hamilton described them, so planned that even if the enemy's western flank had been turned and driven back from the coast the central and eastern portions of the mountain could still be maintained as a bastion to Kilid Bahr, where the thickest cluster of Turkish forts stood as guardians of the Narrows. Hence it became the rôle of Cape Helles to play second fiddle to Anzac, where the Australians and New Zealanders, with their Indian comrades, had defied all the costly efforts of the Turks to hurl them back, and continued to hold open the gateway through which one final thrust forward might still secure for us the command of the Dardanelles. This, therefore, was the main theatre chosen by Sir Ian Hamilton for the decisive effort of early August. He made it clear for the first time in his vivid dispatch of December 11, 1915, that it was not the Suvla Bay landing but the attack



From an Official Photograph

A Letter Home from "Sea View" Dug-out

Just above the top right-hand corner a cross marks the grave of one of the soldier's fallen comrades

from Anzac upon which he chiefly relied to grip the waist of the Peninsula, strangle the enemy's communications, and so win through to Maidos. The simultaneous assaults in the south were also intended merely as a subsidiary part of the great attack. "Anzac", to quote from Sir Ian Hamilton's dispatch, "was to deliver the knock-down blow; Helles and Suvla were complementary operations." The main strategical conception was as follows:—

1. To break out with a rush from Anzac and cut off the bulk of the Turkish army from land communication with Constantinople.
2. To gain such a command for Sir Ian Hamilton's artillery as to cut off

the bulk of the Turkish army from sea traffic whether with Constantinople or with Asia.

3. Incidentally, to secure Suvla Bay as a winter base for Anzac and all the troops operating in the northern theatre.

The story of this great venture is best told in three main sections—the containing attack in the southern zone to keep the enemy's eyes fixed rather upon Helles than Anzac; the main attack of the Anzacs upon the Sari Bair range; and the Suvla Bay landing.

## HELLES

Apart from such minor ruses as the surprise landing by a force of 300 men



From an Official Photograph

The Royal Mail Service in Gallipoli: Wayside Letter-box for the Troops—made out of an old cartridge box

on the northern shore of the Gulf of Saros, demonstrations by French war-ships opposite Mitylene along the Syrian coast, and the Anzac's preliminary attack on Lone Pine trenches, the first of the concerted moves was made in the southern zone, on the bloody battle-fields of Helles. This was on August 6, 1915, by which time Sir Ian Hamilton had repaired to Imbros, in order to keep in touch with all the scattered theatres. Imbros lies in the Ægean roughly equidistant from Cape Helles, Anzac, and Suvla, and the centre of the cable system. Thence Sir Ian could follow each phase of the triple attack and be ready with his two divisions of reserves to throw in reinforcements where they seemed most to be required. This was sufficient answer to certain unworthy criticisms regarding his own course of action during the operations.

"Were I to commit myself at the outset to any one of these three theatres", he adds, "I must lose my sense of proportion. Worse, there being no lateral communication between them, as soon as I landed at one I was cut off from present touch with both of the others."

Friday, August 6, 1915, therefore, found the Commander-in-Chief following the opening moves at Helles from General Head-quarters in the Ægean Sea, while Lieutenant-General Birdwood was completing his local preparations at Anzac for the grand assault on Chunuk Bair planned for the ensuing night, and the 9th Army Corps was preparing to slip across to Suvla Bay from Imbros and Mudros as soon as darkness had fairly set in. The

rest of the new forces were coming from Mitylene, 120 miles from the arena into which all the scattered detachments were to concentrate. The map on p. 147 shows these various movements at a glance.

Those who still count Friday an unlucky day will shake their heads solemnly over the disasters which marred this enterprise from the very beginning. Though the subsidiary operations in the southern zone were chiefly in the nature of a holding attack to keep the Turks round Achi Baba while the main assault was developed in the north, it was Sir Ian Hamilton's firm determination to advance also in that direction if possible; but it so happened that the Turks had planned a great attack at the same time, with the result that the British troops, when they assaulted at 3.50 p.m., after the preliminary bombardment on August 6, found the trenches selected for the onslaught packed with the enemy. "We had, in fact, by a coincidence as strange as it was unlucky, anticipated a Turkish offensive by an hour or more at most!"

The attack was directed against 1200 yards of the Turkish front opposite our own right and right centre, and was delivered by the 88th Brigade of the 29th Division, the 42nd Division at the same time being entrusted with the task of capturing two small Turkish trenches enfilading the main advance. Unfortunately, the weeks which had elapsed since the last serious encounters had enabled the shaken enemy to recover his *moral* and strengthen his defences. Warsaw had just fallen, and, with the arrival of two new divi-

sions to replace those who had been most severely handled, the Turks were again fighting at the very top of their form. Massed as they were for their own offensive they were too many and too strongly entrenched for the oncoming British troops, who, though



Map showing approximately the Allies' Line across the Krithia Road, Cape Helles, in the attack of August 6, 1915

pressing the attack with the utmost bravery and perseverance, and carrying large sections of the enemy's line on the left, never had any real success. Sir Ian Hamilton mentions the 1st Battalion Essex Regiment in particular for forcing their way into the crowded trench opposite them, where, however, once in, they were subjected to the heaviest musketry fire from both



flanks, as well as in reverse, and were shattered by showers of bombs. The 42nd (East Lancashire) Division made two onslaughts with the resolute courage which had distinguished them in the earlier battles, but both efforts recoiled in face of the unexpected volume of fire developed by the Turks. Darkness found many of our men fighting it out where they stood, but repeated counter-attacks on the part of the Turks robbed them of such positions as they had captured. "By nightfall", Sir Ian Hamilton was forced to admit, "none of the enemy's line remained in our possession."

Yet he persevered in his southern plans on the following morning, notwithstanding that the Turks themselves in turn were by this time attacking the left of the line from which our own troops had advanced the day before. At all costs the enemy must be prevented from reinforcing to the northwards, where the grand concerted attack was now being launched. The objective in this renewed attack on the Krithia line, begun at 9.40 a.m. by the 125th Brigade on the right and the 129th on the left, was a double row of Turkish trenches on a front of some 800 yards between the Mal Tepe Dere and the west branch of the Kanli Dere. The enemy's stubborn resistance on the previous day forewarned the troops of the sternness of their task, and they were not deceived. After an hour and a half of the most determined fighting, with the tide of battle surging backwards and forwards as the British troops broke through in places, only to find it impossible to maintain themselves for long in the face

of the concentrated fire and counter-attacks of the enemy, the sorely-tried troops on the right and left were unable to make any real impression on the impregnable defences, and were deprived of what little ground had already been won. The one useful advance was made by the East Lancashire men in the centre, where the stiffest part of the battle raged from morning till night for a vineyard on the west of the Krithia road. The vineyard was not more than some 200 yards long by 100 yards broad, but its tactical importance may be measured by the ardour with which the Turks returned again and again to the attack, only to dash themselves to pieces against the invincible defence. Thanks to the fine endurance of the 6th and 7th Lancashire Fusiliers—two of the Territorial battalions which covered themselves with glory in the battle of the 4th of June, when the whole of the same Lancashire division distinguished itself—it was found possible to hold the vineyard throughout the ensuing night, a massive column of the enemy, which meantime strove to overwhelm their thinned ranks, being, as Sir Ian Hamilton bears witness, "shattered to pieces in the attempt".

Up to this point the 42nd Division had been under the temporary command of Major-General W. R. Marshall, General Officer commanding the 87th Brigade, its own commander, Major-General W. Douglas, acting for the time being in command of the whole corps—the 8th—succeeding on July 24 Lieutenant-General Hon. Sir Frederick Stopford, who had been



gaining local experience in temporary command at Helles while his own army corps—the 9th—were assembling at Mudros and elsewhere for Suvla Bay. Lieutenant-General Hunter-Weston, hitherto commanding the 8th Corps, had, it will be remembered,

it from our hands. Two specially furious attacks were delivered on August 8, one at 4.40 a.m. and the other at 8.30 p.m., but British bayonets each time won the day. Then came continuous bomb attacks throughout the night, “but the 6th Lancashire



Major-General W. Douglas, Commanding the 42nd (East Lancashire) Division, in temporary command of the 8th Corps at Helles during the Attack of August 6, 1915

been invalided home. His successor was Lieutenant-General Sir F. J. Davies, who took over the command at Helles on August 8th, when Major-General Douglas reverted to the command of the 42nd Division, which continued to bear the brunt of the fighting on the Krithia line for the next few days. Time after time the Turks flung themselves upon the lost vineyard in the vain hope of wresting

Fusiliers and 4th East Lancashire Regiment”, writes the Commander-in-Chief, “stuck gamely to their task at the eastern end of the fighting”. It was on this occasion that Major Roderick L. Lees, of the 6th (Territorial) Lancashire Fusiliers, won the D.S.O.

“He commanded the defence of a position,” states the *Gazette*, “against heavy odds with great skill and tenacity, and

showed absolute disregard of personal danger in leading and encouraging his men."

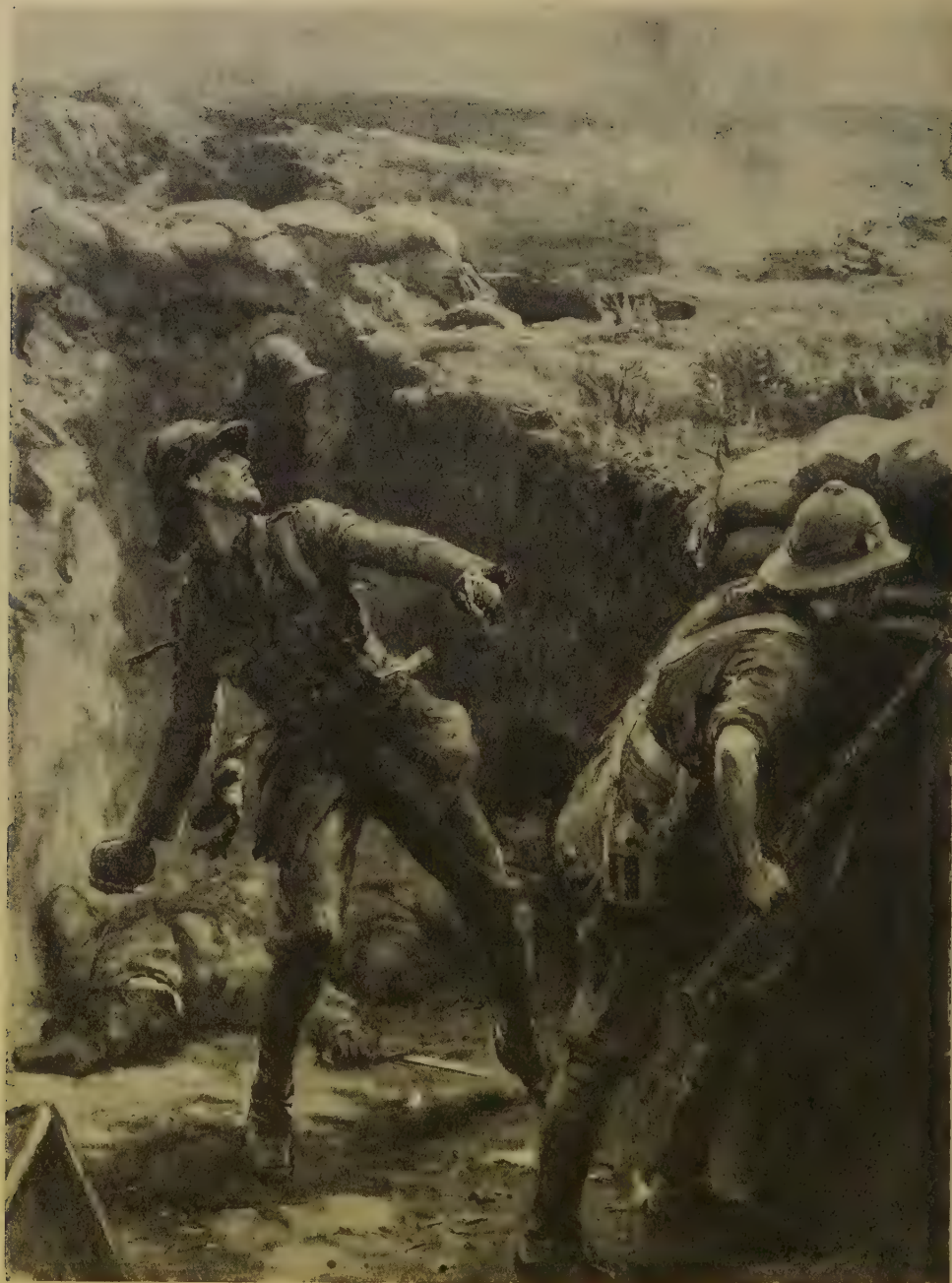
The north-west corner of the vineyard was also hard pressed, but the situation here was saved by the personal bravery of Lieutenant William T. Forshaw, of the 9th (Territorial) Battalion Manchester Regiment, whose fine feat of arms—deservedly winning for him the Victoria Cross—is best described in the *Gazette's* official record:—

"When holding the north-west corner of the 'Vineyard', he was attacked and heavily bombed by Turks, who advanced time after time by three trenches which converged at this point, but he held his own, not only directing his men and encouraging them by exposing himself with the utmost disregard to danger, but personally throwing bombs continuously for forty-one hours. When his detachment was relieved after twenty-four hours he volunteered to continue the direction of operations. Three times during the night of 8th-9th August he was again heavily attacked, and once the Turks got over the barricade, but, after shooting three with his revolver, he led his men forward and recaptured it. When he rejoined his battalion he was choked and sickened by bomb fumes, badly bruised by a fragment of shrapnel, and could barely lift his arm from continuous bomb-throwing. It was due to his personal example, magnificent courage, and endurance that this very important corner was held."

The glory of this arduous struggle was shared by Corporal S. Bayley, of the same battalion, who remained with Lieutenant Forshaw throughout the forty-one critical hours, volunteering to remain behind with his officer when

his detachment was relieved. Foremost in the successful counter-attack led by Lieutenant Forshaw, which recaptured and held the barricade, he, too, was utterly exhausted when ultimately relieved, and richly deserved the D.C.M. afterwards awarded him. This unceasing struggle, as Sir Ian Hamilton said, was a supreme test for battalions already exhausted by forty-eight hours incessant fighting, and weakened by the loss of so many good leaders and men; "but the peculiar grit of the Lancastrians was equal to the strain, and they did not fail". By the morning of the 9th the Turks had evidently suffered enough for the time being, and the sorely-tried British troops were relieved. Four nights later the Turks made one more sudden, overwhelming attack on the stricken vineyard—"and got it!" But on the following day our bombers again turned them out, and this time clinched matters. New fire trenches were wired and loopholed, and the whole position remained in our hands until the final evacuation. In summing up the results of these subsidiary operations in the south Sir Ian Hamilton claims that at least they had served their main purpose:—

"If the local successes were not all that had been hoped for, yet a useful advance had been achieved, and not only had they given a fresh, hard-fighting enemy more than he had bargained for, but they had actually drawn down Turkish reinforcements to their area. And how can a commander say enough for the troops who, aware that their task was only a subsidiary one, fought with just as much vim and resolution as if they were storming the battlements of Constantinople."



Drawn by Philip Dadd

Territorial Heroism on the Krithia Lines, August 8-9, 1915: how Lieutenant Forshaw, of the 9th Battalion Manchester Regiment, won the Victoria Cross, and saved his corner of the Vineyard

Lieutenant Forshaw smoked incessantly during this ordeal, in order to ignite the fuses of his bombs, which he threw continuously, says the *Gazette*, for forty-one hours.



ANZAC—SUBSIDIARY  
ATTACKS

The scene shifts to the main theatre, where Lieutenant-General Birdwood and his gallant men were to be given the chance they had so long counted on, while the 9th Army Corps landed at Suvla Bay and advanced on their left. Anzac had been silently preparing for the great adventure for weeks past. Only one serious encounter had relieved the deadly routine of trench warfare in this region since the fighting described in our last chapter on the Gallipoli campaign. This was the successful attack by the 3rd Australian \*Brigade on the night of July 31 against a network of Turkish trenches which was beginning to threaten the safety of our advanced work on the extreme right of Anzac called Tasmania Post. The way was prepared by a bombardment at 10.15 p.m., followed ten minutes later by the explosion of three mines under sections of the enemy's position. This was the signal for the infantry advance, and the 3rd Australians were in the smoking craters before the whole of the debris had fallen. Another section was rushed with the bayonet. At least 100 Turks were killed on the spot, and no counter-attack was attempted. The result on our side was the loss of 11 killed and 74 wounded, and the gain of the crest of the ridge, thus materially improving our position in that part of the line.

It was a happy omen for the big attack to be launched a few days later, preparations for which were already well in hand. Secrecy was now a vital factor throughout, a necessary

part of the Commander-in-Chief's plan being to put ashore in ambush as many fresh fighting-men as our limited holding at Anzac could possibly accommodate. The seasoned troops already there had to toil like slaves to accumulate the vast stores of food, drink, and munitions of war that would be needed, prepare new concealed bivouacs and interior communications, and pump several days' water-supply from the beach into tanks half-way up the mountains—for no water could be expected on the summits of Sari Bair, and water was as essential a factor in the whole operations as were secrecy and surprise. Nearly all this hard preliminary work was done by the Australians and New Zealanders by night; "and the uncomplaining efforts of these much-tried troops in preparation", to quote Sir Ian Hamilton's own words, "were in a sense as much to their credit as their heroism in the battles that followed".

The entire details of the operations allotted to the Anzac area, it should be explained, were formulated by Lieutenant-General Birdwood, subject, of course, to the approval of the Commander-in-Chief, who had no modifications to suggest—"so excellently", he writes, "was this vital business worked out"—and the whole of the preparations were completed by August 6 in a manner which reflected the utmost credit upon the Corps Commander and his staff, as well as upon the men themselves. Silently, in the darkest hours of the night, the reinforcements were slipped across by our indispensable and infallible navy, and smuggled away in the concealed bivouacs pre-



pared for them by the young veterans from the South. For three nights in succession, until and including August 6, these reinforcements poured in, apparently without exciting the suspicions of the enemy, though his opposing lines in places were a bare 20 yards from our trenches, and the whole sea route lay open to the Turks from their dominating summit. In some respects this was a more remarkable achievement than the larger landing at Suvla Bay. Every modern appliance of telescope, telegraph, and wireless, as Sir Ian Hamilton pointed out, was at the disposal of the enemy:

"Yet the instructions worked out at General Head-quarters in the minutest detail (the result of conferences with the Royal Navy, which were attended by Brigadier-General Skeen, of General Birdwood's staff) were such that the scheme was carried through without a hitch. The preparation of the ambush was treated as a simple matter by the services therein engaged, and yet I much doubt whether any more pregnant enterprise than this of landing so large a force under the very eyes of the enemy, and of keeping them concealed there three days, is recorded in the annals of war."

Now, at last, all was practically ready for the great plunge, by means of which, with a vigorous offensive from Anzac, combined with a surprise landing to the north of it, Sir Ian Hamilton meant, in his own words, "to try and win through to Maidos, leaving behind me a well-protected line of communications starting from Suvla Bay". On the eve of this decisive effort, looking across the low-lying scrub from the ridges of Anzac to Suvla Bay, no sail or other sign was

yet visible to the Australians and New Zealanders of the new British army that was to muster there in the silence of the night, and accompany them to victory, as it was all too fondly hoped, on the following day. The overture had already been sounded at Anzac, where the works of the enemy's left and centre, during the 4th, 5th, and 6th of August, had been subjected to a slow bombardment.

General Birdwood now had at his disposal, in round numbers, 37,000 rifles and 72 guns, with naval support from two cruisers, four monitors, and two destroyers. These troops were divided into two main portions, one to hold the existing Anzac position and make frontal attacks therefrom, and the other to assault the Chunuk Bair ridge. The first of these tasks was assigned to the Australian Division (plus the 1st and 3rd Light Horse Brigades and two battalions of the 40th Brigade); the second to the combined New Zealand and Australian Division (less the 1st and 3rd Light Horse Brigades), the 13th Division (less five battalions), the 29th Indian Infantry Brigade, and the Indian Mountain Artillery Brigade. The 29th Brigade of the 10th Division (less one battalion) and the 38th Brigade were held in reserve.

Before the real push, and while the British army in the southern zone was concentrating Turkish attention upon the defence of the Krithia line during the afternoon of August 6, another diversion was made upon the Lone Pine entrenchment to the south of the Anzac area, to draw the enemy's reserves from the grand attack im-

pending on his right. Lone Pine was a formidable work, or series of works, situated at the end of a plateau some 400 feet high, commanding one of the main sources of the Turkish water-supply, and its capture by the 1st Australian Infantry Brigade under Brigadier-General N. M. Smyth—the men from New South Wales—like

well-nigh impregnable, and the frontage for attack across the plateau at the end of which it stood was at most 220 yards, the distance confronting the salient in the Australian line varying from 60 to 120 yards. The whole was exposed to heavy enfilade fire both from the north and the south. But there was no wavering when, after



Drawn by S. Begg

The Battle of Lone Pine Plateau, August 6, 1915: how the gallant Australians attacked the covered-in Trenches of the Turks

the dearly-won victory of the Lancastrians at the same moment in the vineyard by the Krithia road at Helles, was one of the many redeeming episodes of a splendid failure. It was planned throughout by Major-General H. B. Walker, commanding the 1st Australian Division, whose thoroughness, says Sir Ian Hamilton, contributed largely to the success of the enterprise. The Lone Pine entrenchment was known to be

a continuous bombardment of the enemy's positions for an hour, from 4.30 p.m., the whistles blew for the infantry attack, and the men of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Australian Battalions—the 1st Battalion forming the brigade reserve—scrambled over their parapets in a veritable race with death. Every Australian, we are told by Captain Bean, the Official Press Representative with the Imperial Forces in the Dardanelles, was distinguished

by white bands on his sleeve and a square white patch on his back; and immediately the whole heathland in front seemed alive with white patches dashing for the sand mounds opposite.

"One had expected", he writes, "that when the troops arrived on the other side they would fire into the trench for a moment and then jump into the space they had cleared. But the white patches did not jump in as they came to the enemy's trench. They gradually strung out along it, standing up as men might string out along a kerb when they run up to see a street procession. Those who came up from behind poked along among their comrades until they found a place, and then they stood there too, obviously puzzled."

Instead of an open trench the Australians, after surmounting the barbed-wire entanglements, were confronted by an entrenchment solidly defended by an overhead cover of stout pine beams which resisted all individual efforts to move it, while loopholes continued to spit fire, and machine-guns to decimate the Australian ranks from left and right. Yet none thought of turning back in the face of that appalling discovery. The one thing that counted was how to get through. Some dashed on over the roofed-in stronghold, and even over the second line of enemy trenches to the open communication-trenches beyond, through which some of the Turks were already fleeing as other Australians, squeezing through certain small manholes left here and there in the roof, dropped down into the dark galleries one by one, with a courage which simply beggars description.



Lieutenant Frederick H. Tubb, 7th Australian Brigade,  
one of the V.C. Heroes of Lone Pine

Those of them who lived to face the astounded enemy—for many were bayoneted or shot as they fell—fought with a fury which rendered them for the moment invincible. Their numbers rapidly increased as other groups bodily lifted up the pine beams and made larger openings. Within little more than a quarter of an hour the Australians were firmly established in the enemy's vitals. A few minutes later the reserves of the 2nd Battalion, advancing over their paradoss, drove out, killed, or captured the occupants, and made good the whole of the trenches. Then came the reserves of the 3rd and 4th Battalions, and at 6.20 p.m. the 1st Battalion, which, as already explained, formed the brigade reserve, followed to consolidate the position. Thus was Lone Pine taken on August 6, 1915.



"The Turks", wrote Sir Ian Hamilton, "were in great force and very full of fight, yet one weak Australian brigade, numbering at the outset but 2000 rifles, and supported only by two weak battalions, carried the work under the eyes of a whole enemy division, and maintained their grip upon it like a vice during six days' successive counter-attacks. High praise is due to Brigadier-General Smyth and to his battalion commanders. The irresistible dash and daring of officers and men in the initial charge were a glory to Australia. The stout-heartedness with which they clung to the captured ground in spite of fatigue, severe losses, and the continual strain of shell-fire and bomb attacks may seem less striking to the civilian; it is even more admirable to the soldier. From start to finish the artillery support was untiring and vigilant. Owing to the rapid, accurate fire of the 2nd New Zealand Battery, under Major Sykes, several of the Turkish onslaughts were altogether defeated in their attempts to get to grips with the Australians. Not

a chance was lost by these gunners, although time and again the enemy's artillery made direct hits on their shields."

Lieutenant Percy J. Ross, of the 7th Battery Australian Field-Artillery, similarly distinguished himself, winning the Military Cross for keeping his gun in action for forty-eight hours from the beginning of the action, although continuously attacked at close range by superior gun-fire. Several times his gun emplacement was almost completely demolished, and he himself was finally wounded.

Where every man deserved the Victoria Cross in the initial charge it was probably found impossible to single out any one more than another for that decoration. No fewer than seven Victoria Crosses, however, were awarded for the later stages of the protracted struggle for Lone Pine, and both Captain Alan Humphrey Scott, of the 4th Australian Battalion, and Captain C. Duncan Sasse, of the 1st Australian Battalion, were awarded the D.S.O. for conspicuous gallantry and determination during the 6th. The first V.C. for Lone Pine was won during the two following days by another New South Wales man, Private Leonard Keysor, also of the 1st Australians, who was largely instrumental in saving a portion of the captured trenches in the face of repeated counter-attacks. For the Turks were in no mood to accept defeat. Within a few hours of the loss of the position their reinforcements had swept forward with the bayonet in staggering numbers, only to fall beneath the hail of British shot and



Private John Hamilton, 1st Australian Brigade, another of the V.C. Heroes of Lone Pine



# The Great World War

shell and bomb, though here and there a temporary foothold was secured in a section of the trenches. In the middle of the night the battle broke out afresh and continued for seven hours, proceeding intermittently till dawn on the 8th. It was during these fruitless attacks—costly to both sides—that Private Keysor won his V.C., picking up live bombs and hurling them back at the enemy at great risk to his own life, and continuing to throw bombs on the 7th, although himself wounded, thereby saving a portion of the trench which it was most important to hold. On the 8th the Turks temporarily recaptured this vital portion, but, nothing daunted, and although wounded a second time, he bombed them out again. It is also recorded that he declined to leave even when marked for hospital, and, volunteering to throw bombs for another company which had lost all its bomb-throwers, he continued to assail the enemy till the situation was relieved. Two other V.C.'s fell to the 1st Australians on the following day, one to Captain Alfred John Shout, who lost his right hand and left eye in bombing the enemy at close range

with reckless daring and success, and subsequently, alas! succumbed to his injuries; and Private John Hamilton, whose coolness and utter disregard to personal safety played a large part in



The Battlefields of Anzac

The elaborate series of operations in August, 1915, began with holding attacks on Lone Pine, German Officer's Trench, and Baby 700 Trench, and culminated in the main assaults on the Sari Bair heights.

driving off the enemy's last serious attack.

On the 8th the 2nd Battalion, which had lost its commanding officer, and suffered especially severely in all ranks, was withdrawn and replaced by the

7th Battalion, the reserve to the 2nd Australian Brigade. It was not long before the men of the 7th were called upon to prove their mettle. Their response was worthy of the occasion, and of the heroes whose places they had filled. In the early hours of the 9th—5 o'clock to be exact—the Turks made their last supreme effort to recapture Lone Pine by a determined counter-attack from the east and south-east, after a feint from the north. "The 7th Battalion", writes Sir Ian Hamilton, "bore the brunt of the shock, and handled the attack so vigorously that by 7.45 a.m. there were clear signs of demoralization in the enemy's ranks." On the right a series of determined efforts had been made on an isolated sap, and six officers in succession killed or wounded, a portion of the position being lost. Lieutenant William J. Symons, of the 7th Australians, then led a fearless charge, and retook the sap, shooting two Turks with his revolver:

"The sap", to quote from the *Gazette's* account of the incident, for which this gallant officer received the V.C., "was under hostile fire from three sides, and Lieutenant Symons withdrew some 15 yards to a spot where some overhead cover could be obtained, and in the face of heavy fire built up a sand barricade. The enemy succeeded in setting fire to the fascines and woodwork of the head-cover, but Lieutenant Symons extinguished the fire and rebuilt the barricade. His coolness and determination finally compelled the enemy to discontinue their attacks."

The final victory at Lone Pine, in no small measure, was also due to the heroic stand made by Lieutenant Frederick H. Tubb and Corporals

Alexander S. Burton and William Dunstan—all of the 7th—who broke the force of the oncoming storm at the outset. Advancing up a sap leading to the centre of the trench held by this gallant party the Turks blew in a sand-bag barricade which barred their passage. Only one foot of the barricade remained standing. Yet Lieutenant Tubb and the two corporals not only repulsed the enemy but rebuilt the barrier. Twice again the Turks, supported by strong bombing-parties, succeeded in blowing in the barricade, but on each occasion Lieutenant Tubb, although wounded in the head and arm, beat them back with the help of his brave subordinates, and reconstructed it. Corporal Burton, unhappily, was killed while most gallantly building up the parapet under a hail of bombs. Lieutenant Tubb and Corporal Dunstan survived to maintain their position until the Turks were finally beaten off, and were each rewarded with the Victoria Cross, the same decoration being conferred as a posthumous honour upon their fallen comrade.

This crowning incident marked the turning-point in the sanguinary struggle for Lone Pine, though sniping and bombing continued more or less throughout the ensuing day and night, lasting, indeed, until August 12, by which date the Australians had manifestly pegged out their claim beyond further serious dispute. How bitterly the hand-to-hand fighting had been contested in the semi-obscurity of the trenches was sufficiently revealed in the following passage in Sir Ian Hamilton's dispatch:—

"In one corner eight Turks and six Australians were found lying as they had bayoneted one another. To make room for the fighting-men the dead were ranged in rows on either side of the gangway. After the first violence of the counter-attacks had abated, 1000 corpses—our own and Turkish—were dragged out from the trenches."

Heavy though our own casualties had been, those of the enemy had been much heavier, while our captures included 134 prisoners, 7 machine-guns, and a large quantity of ammunition and equipment. More valuable still had been the success of the attack in drawing towards it all the local enemy reserves. This the Commander-in-Chief holds, more than any other cause, to have been the reason for the light opposition offered to the Suvla Bay landing, and the few reinforcements at first available against our attack on Sari Bair.

This brings us back to the other minor moves in the Anzac area devised to keep the Turks busy during the Suvla Bay landing and the grand attack. These were frontal assaults to the right and left of Quinn's Post, one at midnight on August 6-7 upon the work known as German Officer's Trench, on the extreme right of our line; and others on the Nek and Baby 700 Trenches, delivered at 4.30 a.m. on Saturday morning, the 7th. None of these frontal attacks was so fortunate as the Lone Pine affair in making good any ground, but they fulfilled their main object in preventing the enemy from reinforcing against the simultaneous advance against the high ridges. "The 2nd Australian Brigade", is Sir Ian Hamilton's testimony, "did

all that men could do; the 8th Light Horse only accepted their repulse after losing three-fourths of that devoted band who so bravely sallied forth from Russell's Top." The Colonel of the 8th Australian Light Horse, Lieutenant-Colonel A. H. White, had insisted on leading his regiment in this last-named venture, but he had only covered a few yards after clearing the parapet before he was killed. Two lines of officers and men were mown down in succession:

"I shall never forget that moment", writes Captain Bean, who was making his way along a path not very far away when the tremendous fusillade broke out. "It was the greeting of the Turkish rifles and machine-guns as the Light Horse cleared the Australian parapet. One knew that nobody could live in it. Many fell back into the trench wounded before they had cleared even the parapet. Others, wounded just outside, managed to crawl back and tumble in before they were hit a second and third time and killed, as they certainly would be, if they remained lying out there. Practically all those that were wounded were hit in this way on our own parapet. Exactly two minutes after the first line had cleared the parapet, the second line jumped out without the slightest hesitation and followed them."

Some of that first or second line succeeded—no one in all probability will ever know how—in crossing the death-swept fire zone and entering the south-eastern corner of the Turkish trench. For two minutes these unknown heroes managed to flutter behind the enemy's parapet the small flag which had been the signal arranged, in the event of the capture of the position, for a party of the









*H. R. H. King Peter of Serbia*



Royal Welsh Fusiliers to storm the gully on the right. By this time, continues Captain Bean, a French "75"—captured by the Turks from the Serbians in the Balkan War—was pouring her shell into the Nek, and machine-guns, far too many to count by their noise, were whipping up the dust so that it was impossible to distinguish anything in the haze. Then, when that gallant signal had fluttered for two breathless minutes, some unseen hand tore it down.

"The fight in that corner of the trench, whatever it was, was over; and it can only have ended one way. In the meantime, ten minutes after the second line, the third line had gone over the parapet as straight and as quick as the others. The attack was then stopped, and, fortunately, was stopped in time to prevent a small part of this third line reaching the fire zone. It was all over within a quarter of an hour."

From the handful of maimed survivors who crept back after dark, it was known that the Turkish trenches had been literally crammed with troops, the front row lining the parapet with fixed bayonets, with a double row behind emptying their rifles as fast as they could fire them. It was some consolation to know that our own guns played havoc among the enemy's crowded ranks. "Those who know", declares the Australasian Record Officer, "say that their losses must have been an ample set-off to our own." Also, as Sir Ian Hamilton points out, the result of this, and the other frontal attacks with the same object in view, was that the Turkish reserves on Battleship Hill were all that day pinned down to the old

Anzac line, and so were not available to meet our main enterprise.

## ANZAC—THE MAIN ATTACK

This brings us at length to the step which, above all others, was to count in the great adventure—the surprise attack on August 6-7 on the summits of the Sari Bair ridge. To do full literary justice to the series of herculean conflicts into which this grand assault resolved itself, and at the same time lose nothing in clearness of narrative, is a task demanding superlative gifts to which we cannot hope to aspire. Even Sir Ian Hamilton's vivid and absorbing dispatch of 30,000 words, though stamping upon the imagination the dauntless heroism of his men and the unparalleled difficulties of his undertaking, left something to be desired in the ordered sequence of his story. We shall not have written in vain if we connect up the scattered threads in a simple direct narrative which shall bring out the essential features of each phase of the operations.

Clearly it was impossible, from the nature of the ground and the dispositions of the enemy, to storm the commanding heights of Sari Bair in one overwhelming rush. First, it was necessary to clear the nearer foot-hills. Hence the effort had to be made by stages, with four separate forces operating at the same time—two covering and two assaulting columns, the whole under the command of Major-General Sir A. J. Godley, the General Officer commanding the combined New Zealand and Australian Division. The

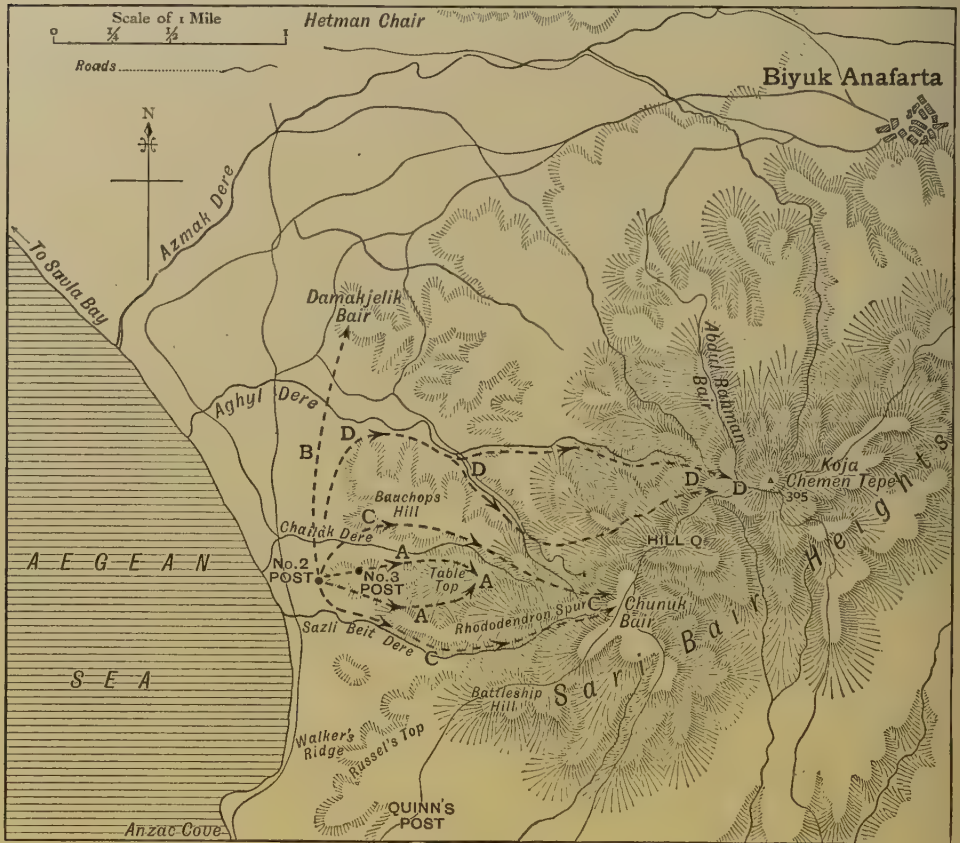


plan of attack and composition of the forces may be stated as follows:—

Right Covering Column, under Brigadier-General A. H. Russell.—New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigade, the Otago

would open up the ravines for the assaulting columns, while at the same time interposing between the right flank of the left covering force and the enemy holding the Sari Bair main ridge.

Left Covering Column, under Brigadier-



Map illustrating the Plan of Attack in the Main Anzac Advance of August 6-7, 1915

A, Right covering column. B, Left covering column. C, Right assaulting column. D, Left assaulting column.

Mounted Rifles Regiment, the Maori Contingent and New Zealand Field Troop. Its object was to seize Table Top and all other enemy positions commanding the foot-hills between the Chailak Dere and the Sazli Beit Dere ravines. If this enterprise succeeded, Sir Ian Hamilton contended, it

General J. H. Travers.—Head-quarters 40th Brigade, half the 72nd Field Company, 4th Battalion, South Wales Borderers, and 5th Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment. This was to march northwards along the beach and seize the hill known as Damakjelik Bair, some 1400 yards north of Table Top. If

successful it would be able to hold out a hand to the 9th Army Corps at Suvla Bay as it landed south of Nibrunesi Point, and at the same time protect the left flank of the left assaulting column against enemy troops from the Anafarta valley during its climb up the Aghyl Dere ravine.

Right Assaulting Column, under Brigadier-General F. E. Johnston.—New Zealand Infantry Brigade, Indian Mountain Battery (less one section), one Company New Zealand Engineers. This was to move up the Chailak Dere and Sazli Beit Dere ravines to the storm of the ridge of Chunuk Bair.

Left Assaulting Column, under Brigadier-General (afterwards Major-General) H. V. Cox.—29th Indian Infantry Brigade, 4th Australian Infantry Brigade, Indian Mountain Battery (less one section), one Company New Zealand Engineers. Its object was to work up the Aghyl Dere and prolong the line of the right assaulting column by storming Hill 305 (Koja Chemen Tepe), the crowning summit of the whole range.

A glance at the map on p. 130 will help to make these movements clear. In Divisional Reserve was held the 6th Battalion, South Lancashire Regiment, and the 8th Battalion, Welsh Regiment (Pioneers) at Chailak Dere; and the 39th Infantry Brigade and half 72nd Field Company at Aghyl Dere.

Let us first accompany Russell's Right Covering Column of New Zealanders in their night attack to seize the Sazli Beit Dere and the Chailak Dere ravines in order that Johnston's Right Assaulting Column might arrive intact within striking distance of victory on the Chunak Bair ridge. Only the day before this momentous 6th of August the New Zealand mounted troops had left Walker's Ridge, which

they had held alternately with the Australian Light Horse—destined but a few hours later to be sacrificed in the feint attack described on pp. 128–9. The New Zealanders were spared that ordeal for the silent march into the foot-hills during the same fateful night. Concentrating at No. 2 Post on the



Brigadier-General A. H. Russell, commanding the Right Covering Column in the Anzac Attack of August 6–7, 1915

seaward end of the nearer slopes they waited for darkness to set in on the 6th, the while our field-guns and howitzers, assisted by the destroyers, monitors, and cruisers, pounded the Turkish positions to the north-east throughout the day. Warnings of the approaching struggle had been whispered about for some time, and now the New Zealanders were braced and eager for the venture, fully informed of what was expected of them. Their

part was to be played in strict silence so long as the night lasted. Bayonets were fixed, but no rifles were allowed to be loaded; and about 9 o'clock on that Friday night, darkness now shrouding every hill and gully, Russell's men stole forth into the half-explored distance. First it was necessary to recapture the old No. 3 Post, which dominated the approaches of both the Chailak Dere and the Sazli Beit Dere.

No. 3 Post had been transformed by the Turks into an enormously powerful redoubt since they had seized it on May 30, when the Wellington Mounted Rifles were surrounded by an enemy force estimated at nearly 2000, and only rescued by New Zealand reinforcements, including part of the 10th (Canterbury) Regiment, after heavy casualties. Now it was retaken by a ruse smartly contrived in conjunction with the navy, and timed to a second. For weeks with this object in view the position had been regularly shelled every night exactly at 9 p.m. by H.M.S. *Colne*, which meantime would light up the whole position with the beams of her search-light. This would last for exactly ten minutes and be precisely repeated after ten minutes interval, the whole performance ending punctually at 9.30. The Turks grew to accept this nightly visitation as a matter of course, and cleared out as soon as the search-light sent its first warning beams, returning when the shelling was at an end. On the night of the 6th the stratagem went like clockwork, the New Zealanders creeping up unseen—the sound of their footsteps drowned by the noise of the bombardment—and pouring out

of the scrub jungle into the vacated redoubt the moment the search-light was switched off at 9.30. Rifles cracked out as soon as the outwitted Turks could recover their senses, but the Auckland Mounted Rifles finished the affair, as ordered, with the bayonet.

At the same time the Wellington Rifles were stealing up the gully on their right, with the Otago and the Canterbury regiments on their left, the Canterburys' duty being to go farthest north, while the Otagos, before following them, swerved to the left to clear Bauchop's Hill—so named after their own colonel. It needs no heated imagination to feel something of the thrill and tension of that silent, determined foray at night into the very heart of the enemy's country. Captain Bean brings it home in his account of the meeting between four New Zealand Scouts ahead of their main party and four other figures in the dark—a Turkish patrol:

"The Turks clearly thought that our men were the usual New Zealand patrol out on its nightly business. They did not want to make a disturbance in the night any more than we did, so they came for our men with the bayonet. There was no sound in that strange duel, just four men fighting four with their bayonets in the dark. The Turks bayoneted one of our men in the jaw and another in the chest—neither fatally—before our four had managed to kill them. There was not a shot fired, and the column went silently on."

Shortly afterwards the Otagos crept away to the left, carrying on with their attack on Bauchop's Hill. The Canterburys pursued their weird trek to the northernmost point in front, where they stalked a machine-gun in the Turkish trenches before the surprised



Turks could remove the breech-block, and captured it after a short, sharp struggle, still without firing a shot, though some of their best men fell to the enemy's rifles. The Turks who stood their ground were swiftly bayoneted on the spot. All over the spurs and gullies of that scrambling hill-side the same wild shadowy scenes were being enacted by other detachments. It is recorded that as the Otagos, "that splendid body of men", as Sir Ian Hamilton described them, reached their goal their colonel just called out to them: "Come on, boys, charge!" when he fell shot through the spine on the hill that already bore his name. The Maoris charged at the critical moment with a fearsome war-cry and a fury which swept every Turk out of their path. They lost heavily in some of the deadly hand-to-hand fighting which ensued, but won a great name for themselves even among a host of heroes, proving, in the words of the Commander-in-Chief, worthy descendants of the warriors of the Gate Pah. At one spot alone about half a dozen Maoris were found lying round the body of one of the officers—Captain Hay. So effectually had this initial clearance been effected that by one o'clock on the Saturday morning the entrance to the ravine and whole of Bauchop's Hill, a maze of ridge and ravine, everywhere entrenched, were fairly in our hands, the surviving Turks fleeing in scattered parties through the tangled foot-hills northward. Thus was the Chailak Dere opened for the unopposed entry of Johnston's Right Assaulting Column for the storm of the ridge of Chunuk

Bair, Russell's men continuing their victorious progress to right and left of the ravine. Simultaneously with their attack on the entrance to Chailak Dere and Bauchop's Hill they had launched another detachment on the right against the frowning heights of Russell's Top, some 400 feet above sea-level, with sides so steep as to be almost sheer, giving the impression, as Sir Ian Hamilton put it, of a mushroom with the flat-topped summit bulging out over its stem. The sides were what the army regulations recognize as "impracticable for infantry", but here and there a scrub-covered ravine afforded a precarious foothold up the precipitous cliffs. Along these goat tracks was the New Zealanders' only hope of reaching their objective, with every yard commanded by the enemy's positions, and the summit itself honeycombed with trenches connected by a communication-alley with another of Sari Bair's threatening bastions, known as Rhododendron Spur. No general in peace manœuvres, declared the Commander-in-Chief, would ask troops to attempt so breakneck an enterprise.

"But just as faith moves mountains, so valour can carry them. The Turks fought bravely—but neither Turks nor angles of ascent were destined to stop Russell or his New Zealanders that night. There are moments during battle when life becomes intensified, when men become supermen, when the impossible becomes simple—and this was one of those moments. The scarped heights were scaled, the plateau was carried by midnight. With this brilliant feat the task of the Right Covering Force was at an end. Its attacks had been made with the bayonet and bomb only; maga-



zines were empty by order; hardly a rifle shot had been fired. Some 150 prisoners were captured as well as many rifles and much equipment, ammunition, and stores. No words can do justice to the achievement of Brigadier-General Russell and his men. There are exploits which must be seen to be realized."

Meantime Johnston's Right Assaulting Column, consisting of New Zealand infantry and engineers, with an Indian Mountain Battery, entering the two southerly ravines at midnight, had split in two, one battalion clambering up the Sazli Beit Dere, and the remainder, led by the Canterbury Infantry Battalion, advancing along the Chailak Dere, which had just been opened for them by Russell's men. But although the barrier at this crucial point had been battered down, the enemy fiercely contested the further passage of the infantry, who were presently forced to deploy across the ravine. Darkness and the hopeless nature of the ground made rapid progress impossible, so that it was 5.45 a.m. before the main body, pressing steadily up the valley, joined their comrades on the lower slopes of the Rhododendron Spur, which they had reached by way of the Sazli Beit. The whole force then moved up the spur, gaining touch with the Left Assaulting Column under Brigadier-General Cox by means of the 10th Gurkhas, in face of very heavy fire and frequent bayonet charges. Eventually, adds Sir Ian Hamilton, "they entrenched on the top of Rhododendron Spur, a quarter of a mile short of Chunuk Bair—i.e. of victory".

Cox's Column of Indian and Austra-



Brigadier-General J. H. Travers, commanding the Left Covering Column (new army) in the Anzac Attack  
(From a photograph by Elliott & Fry)

lian Infantry, with one company of New Zealand Engineers, had crossed the Chailak Dere at 12.30 a.m., and, entering the Aghyl Dere, had taken the Turks completely by surprise. Two Turkish officers, it is recorded, were captured in their pyjamas, and many arms and ammunition were found scattered in all directions. Thenceforward, however, opposition rapidly stiffened, and difficulties increased as the men pushed farther and farther into the unknown heights and depths of this ravine, with the enemy lurking unseen on every hand. Some distance up the Aghyl Dere this force, like the Right Assaulting Column, divided in two, the 4th Australian Brigade fighting its way along the northern fork of the ravine, making for the crowning height of Hill 305 (Koja Chemen Tepe), while

the 29th Indian Infantry Brigade advanced up the southern fork and the spurs north of it to the assault of Hill 2, between Hill 305 and Rhododendron Hill.

"Dawn broke and the crest line was not yet in our hands, although, considering all things, the Left Assaulting Column had made a marvellous advance. The 4th Australian Infantry Brigade was on the line of the Asma Dere (the next ravine north of the Aghyl Dere), and the 29th Indian Infantry Brigade held the ridge west of the Farm below Chunuk Bair and along the spurs to the north-east. The enemy had been flung back from ridge to ridge; an excellent line for the renewal of the attack had been secured, and (except for the exhaustion of the troops) the auspices were propitious."

In the meanwhile the Left Covering Column, under Brigadier-General Travers, had shown what the New

Army—some of the reinforcements secretly landed during the previous nights—could do under good generalship. This force, preceding the Left Assaulting Column across the Chailak Dere, had struck out far to the north to the capture of Damajelik Bair, a height from which it could both assist the landing at Suvla Bay and guard the left flank of the Anzac's main assault from any forces of the enemy which might be assembled in the Anafarta valley. It was a critical test for men who had had no previous taste of fighting, this long night march exposed to flanking fire, and ending in a bayonet charge against an unknown height, "formless and still in the starlight", writes Sir Ian Hamilton, "and garrisoned by those spectres of the imagination, worst enemies of the soldier". But Travers's Column marched on, heedless of the enfilade fire which greeted it from sections of Bauchop's Hill still uncaptured by Russell's men. There was here none of the hesitation which was to prove so fatal a bar to success in the operations already begun from Suvla Bay. The rapidity of this northern advance was largely due to Lieutenant-Colonel Gillespie, "a very fine man," writes Sir Ian Hamilton, "who commanded the advance-guard consisting of his own regiment, the 4th South Wales Borderers, a corps worthy of such a leader". The Borderers rushed every trench they encountered without pausing to take breath until the predetermined spot had been reached from which the final assault was to be launched on Damakjelik Bair. This was now rushed in triumph, the Turkish positions being carried at



Lieutenant-Colonel Gillespie, commanding the 4th South Wales Borderers, killed in the Anzac Attack  
(From a photograph by Gale & Polden)

the point of the bayonet, and the whole hill occupied by 1.30 a.m. Thence Travers's men could hold out a hand to the Suvla Bay troops, and at the same time safeguard the left rear of the Anzac attack, to which it is now time to revert.

Dawn, as already stated, found the Anzacs entrenched within striking distance of victory, but by this time the enemy, thoroughly roused, and fully alive to the new dangers threatening his very vitals, had gathered in such strength as to make every yard of that last quarter of a mile increasingly difficult to take. While Johnston's Right Assaulting Column of New Zealand Infantry, with their Indian Mountain Battery, were still fighting hard to reach their final objective on the ridge of Chunuk Bair, the 4th Australian Infantry Brigade of the Left Assaulting Column were ordered to assault Koja Chemen Tepe, the highest peak of all, with the 14th Sikhs, who had got into touch with them on the southern watershed of the Asma Dere. Artillery support was given, but by 9 a.m. it was realized that the check to the advance of the Right Assaulting Column on Chunuk Bair had rendered this final stroke, for the moment, impossible. Chunuk Bair had first to be taken, and the ridge stretching to the north-east, before the sinister heights of Koja Chemen could be conquered.

With this twofold object in view the two assaulting columns again pressed forward at 9.30 a.m., while our artillery bombarded the enemy reserves now moving up in force along the spurs of Battleship Hill. The Anzacs did all that men could possibly do, but

there is a limit to human endurance even among such magnificent specimens of manhood as filled their heroic ranks. "In spite of all their efforts", writes Sir Ian Hamilton, "their increasing exhaustion, as opposed to the gathering strength of the enemy's fresh troops, began to tell—they had shot their bolt." They had perforce to rest content that day with the ground already won, holding on tenaciously while reconnaissances of Sari Bair were carried out in preparation for another combined assault on the morrow.

"Thus ended", writes Sir Ian Hamilton at this point, "the first phase of the fighting for the Chunuk Bair ridge. Our aims had not fully been attained, and the help we had hoped for from Suvla had not been forthcoming. Yet I fully endorse the words of General Birdwood when he says: 'The troops had performed a feat which is without parallel'."

It was in this advance on the Chunuk Bair ridge on August 7, 1915, that Corporal Cyril R. G. Bassett, of the New Zealand Divisional Signal Company, won the Victoria Cross—the first New Zealander to gain that supreme honour in the Great War. Both then and afterwards Corporal Bassett was repeatedly brought to notice for excellent and most gallant work connected with the repair of telephone lines to the advanced positions by day and night under heavy and continuous fire. It was during the same advance that Sergeant A. A. Atkins, of the Canterbury Battalion, earned the D.C.M. for gallantry and devotion officially recorded as follows:

"While advancing up a narrow gully with precipitous sides, his battalion suddenly came on a strongly-defended post, which





Corporal Bassett, the first New Zealander to win the Victoria Cross in the Great War

barred the way, and from which a heavy rifle fire was directed on the head of the column. Sergeant Atkins, getting his section in hand, without hesitation rushed the position, captured, and held it. He displayed great bravery and coolness, and set a splendid example to all with him."

For the fresh attack in the early hours of the following (Sunday) morning, August 8, the Anzac troops were reorganized in three columns in the following order:—

"Right Column, Brigadier-General F. E. Johnston, to climb up the Chunuk Bair ridge—26th Indian Mountain Battery (less one section), Auckland Mounted Rifles, New Zealand Infantry Brigade, two battalions 13th Division, and the Maori contingent.

Centre and Left Columns, Major-General H. V. Cox, the left column to make for the prolongation of the ridge north-east to Koja Chemen Tepe—21st Indian Mountain Battery (less one section), 4th Australian Brigade, 39th Infantry Brigade (less one battalion), with 6th Battalion South

Lancashire Regiment attached, and the 29th Indian Infantry Brigade.

The attack began at 4.15, and on the right was crowned with a brilliant success. It was headed by the Wellington Battalion and supported by the 7th Gloucester Regiment—another battalion of the New Army—the Auckland Mounted Rifles, the 8th Welsh Pioneers, and the Maori contingent, the whole most gallantly led by Lieutenant-Colonel W. G. Malone, who, alas! fell mortally wounded just after wresting the topmost summit of Chunuk Bair from the enemy and while marking out the line to be held. His eager troops had literally raced one another up the ridge to the summit. Here the 7th Gloucesters suffered appalling losses, but still fought on unflinchingly, even when every single officer had been either killed or wounded, and every company sergeant-major and company quartermaster-sergeant had shared the same fate. From midday to nightfall, while beating off repeated counter-attacks, these gallant Gloucesters were reduced to small groups of men under junior non-coms. or privates.

"Chapter and verse", as Sir Ian Hamilton points out, "may be quoted for the view that the rank-and-file of an army cannot long endure the strain of close hand-to-hand fighting unless they are given confidence by the example of good officers. Yet here is at least one instance where a battalion of the New Army fought right on, from midday to sunset, without *any* officers."

Meantime how fared it with the Centre and Left Columns under Major-General Cox? In the centre the 39th Infantry Brigade of the First



New Army, which had been brought up from the general reserve the day before, clambered up the gullies leading to the Sari Bair ridge with the 29th Indian Brigade, but could make little headway against the murderous fire which greeted it on all sides, though some ground was won on the spurs to the north-east of the farm marked on the map to the left of Rhododendron Spur. On the left the 4th Australian Brigade stumbled into a death-trap of concealed machine-guns and rifle-fire as it advanced from the Asmak Dere against Abdul Rahman Bair, a spur running due north from Koja Chemen. Held up by this ambush, and all but surrounded, the Australians, after losses amounting to over 1000, were withdrawn to their original positions. "Here they stood at bay," writes Sir Ian Hamilton, "and though the men were by now half dead with thirst and fatigue, they bloodily repulsed attack after attack delivered by heavy columns of Turks."

Though disaster had thus dogged the footsteps of the Left and Centre Columns, and the expected support from Suvla still hung fire, the capture of Chunuk Bair by the Right Column was confidently regarded by the Commander-in-Chief as a presage of victory. "Even the troops who had been repulsed were quite undefeated—quite full of fight—and so it was decided to hold hard as we were till nightfall, and then to essay one more grand attack, wherein the footing gained on Chunuk Bair would this time be used as a pivot." It was arranged to launch this final assault before daybreak on the following (Monday)

morning, August 9, in three columns, composed as follows:—

"No. 1 Column, Brigadier-General F. E. Johnston.—26th Indian Mountain Battery (less one section), the Auckland and Wellington Mounted Rifles Regiments, the New Zealand Infantry Brigade, and two battalions of the 13th (New Army) Division. Its duties were to hold and consolidate the ground won on the 6th, and in co-operation with the other columns to capture the whole of Chunuk Bair and extend to the south-east.

"No. 2 Column, Major-General H. V. Cox.—21st Indian Mountain Battery (less one section), 4th Australian Brigade, 39th Brigade (less the 7th Gloucesters, relieved after their cruel losses on Chunuk Bair), with the 6th Battalion South Lancashire Regiment attached, and the Indian Infantry Brigade. This column was to attack Hill Q, lying, as already explained, between Chunuk Bair and Koja Chemen.

"No. 3 Column, Brigadier-General A. H. Baldwin, commanding 38th Infantry Brigade.—Two battalions each from the 38th and 29th Brigades, and one from the 40th Brigade—all forming part of the First New Army. It was this last column which was to deliver the main attack, the object of the other two being to co-operate with it."

The way was prepared for this final blow by a terrific bombardment which burst forth at 4.30 the next morning from all the available guns on shore or afloat, reaching its climax three-quarters of an hour later. It had been planned to mass Baldwin's Column, which, after assembling in the Chailak Dere, was moving up towards General Johnston's head-quarters, behind the trenches held by the New Zealand Infantry Brigade on the crest of Chunuk Bair, and thence to launch the battalions in successive lines. But now fell the most disheartening piece of ill-luck of all that luckless effort.

General Baldwin—"through no fault of his own", Sir Ian Hamilton hastens to explain—lost his way, partly owing to the darkness and the awful nature of the country, and partly to the fact that sufficient reconnaissance of routes had been impossible in the time. Straying to the left in the hopeless

swiftness of hillmen born and bred. Sweeping all before them, they carried the heights of the col between Chunuk Bair and Hill Q, and for a few golden moments, with some of the 6th South Lancashire Regiment, who had also topped the crest, seemed at last to have gained the crowning victory.



Prisoners of War: Wounded Turks being brought into the British Lines

maze of scrub and gully and ridge, he was only at the line of the Farm—Chunuk Bair—at 5.15, when the bombardment, as pre-arranged, suddenly switched off on to the flanks and reverse slopes of the Chunuk Bair positions held by the enemy, and Hill Q. At the appointed moment, however, the 6th Gurkhas of Cox's No. 2 Column, nobly led by Major C. G. L. Allanson, stormed the craggy slopes of Sari Bair with the success and

They stood in full view of the goal of all those mighty and costly efforts of the last few months. Below was the long road of communication through the very heart of the Peninsula, leading northward to Bulair and Constantinople, and southward to the Turkish lines round Achi Baba. Away to the south-east were Maidos and the forts of the Narrows themselves. It was worth the loss of 10,000 lives to retain their precious foothold and the salient

already won by the New Zealanders and Gloucesters, with the Welsh Pioneers, on Chunuk Bair.

Flushed with victory, and unaware that Baldwin's Column had gone astray, they pursued the retreating Turks down the far side of the crest. But at this supreme moment the fortune of war again turned against us.

"Baldwin's column", writes Sir Ian Hamilton, "was still a long way from our trenches on the crest of Chunuk Bair, whence they should even now have been sweeping out towards Q along the whole ridge of the mountain. And instead of Baldwin's support came suddenly a salvo of heavy shells. These, falling so unexpectedly among the stormers, threw them into terrible confusion. The Turkish commander saw his chance; instantly his troops were rallied and brought back in a counter-charge, and the South Lancashires and Gurkhas, who had seen the promised land and had seemed for a moment to have held victory in their grasp, were forced backwards over the crest and on to the lower slopes whence they had first started."

"Too late!" had again been written across one of the most tragic pages in the whole history of our Empire. Baldwin's New Army troops were now coming to the assistance in splendid style, but their great opportunity had gone. "That bold but unlucky commander", as Sir Ian Hamilton describes him, had deployed at the farm to the left of the New Zealand trenches on Rhododendron Spur when he realized that he could not possibly reach the trenches on the top of Chunuk Bair in time for the initial attack. Just as the Turks were forcing the Gurkhas and South Lancashires backwards over the crest they had so brilliantly cap-



Brigadier-General A. H. Baldwin, commanding No. 3 Column in the Assault of August 9  
(From a photograph by F. Robinson)

tured, two companies of the 6th East Lancashire Regiment, together with the 10th Hampshire Regiment, charged up our side of the slope with the bayonet. But a few minutes earlier and these New Army troops would have joined hands with the hard-pressed Gurkhas and South Lancashires, and surely carried all before them. Now, however, the victorious Turks were lining the whole of the high crest in overwhelming numbers, and though the Hampshires and East Lancashires attacked, as the Commander-in-Chief testifies, "with a fine audacity", they were flung back from the height and then pressed still farther down the slope. The situation immediately became so critical that General Baldwin had to withdraw his command to the vicinity of the farm, while the exultant enemy strove with



fanatical energy and courage to hurl the New Zealanders and the two New Army battalions of No. 1 column from the commanding salient which they were still holding on the main knoll of Chunuk Bair.

This foothold was now our last hope of retrieving a desperate situation, and the men responded to the need with a devotion and self-sacrifice above and beyond all praise. The 200 yards held on Chunuk Bair were only occupied by some 800 men all told—the nature of the ground rendering it impossible to hold the crest in stronger force—but every attempt failed that day to turn them out, though repeatedly made in vastly superior strength. That Monday night, after seventy-two hours' incessant fighting, the dauntless survivors of the New Zealand and

New Army troops on Chunuk Bair, half dead with fatigue, were relieved.

The losses of the New Zealanders, heavy though they were, would have been far heavier still but for the heroism of their devoted Medical Corps. Captain Bertram S. Finn, of the New Zealand Medical Corps, won the D.S.O. for working day and night with increasing zeal and without rest in this perilous work, carried out under continuous fire. On one occasion his dressing-station was heavily shelled for an hour, many assistants and wounded being hit. It was owing to Captain Finn's strenuous efforts that numbers of the wounded lying in the more exposed positions were removed to places of greater safety.

The trenches which the New Zealanders and their New Army comrades had so magnificently held on Chunuk Bair were handed over to two other battalions of the New Army—the 6th Loyal North Lancashire Regiment and the 5th Wiltshire Regiment—connected by the Hampshires with the troops at the farm. The Lancashire men were the first to arrive, under Lieutenant-Colonel H. G. Levinge, who, even in the darkness, saw at a glance that the trenches, hurriedly chosen in the first place, were most dangerously sited. The New Zealanders had been too exhausted with incessant fighting to do much digging. In many places the trenches were not more than a few inches deep. In the little time that was left to him Lieutenant-Colonel Levinge strengthened these defences where he could, and also dug observation-posts on the actual crest—hitherto left even with-



Lieutenant-Colonel H. G. Levinge, commanding the 6th Loyal North Lancashire Regiment on Chunuk Bair  
(From a photograph by Gale & Polden)



out look-outs, the trenches, on the South African system, having been withdrawn from the sky-line. The Wiltshires, delayed by the intricate country, did not join the Loyal North Lancashires until 4 a.m., "and were then told", says Sir Ian Hamilton, "to lie down in what was believed, erroneously, to be a covered position". Here daybreak found them on August 10, and with the dawn came first a terrific bombardment from every enemy gun in the neighbourhood, and then, at 5.30 a.m., a stupendous onrush of upwards of a full division of Turks, advancing in successive waves, and hurling themselves, entirely regardless of their lives, upon the doomed British troops. These two battalions, "already weakened in numbers, but not", adds Sir Ian Hamilton, "in spirit, by previous fighting", had no possible chance against the never-ending horde of Turks.

"The North Lancashire men were simply overwhelmed in their shallow trenches by sheer weight of numbers, while the Wilts, who were caught out in the open, were literally almost annihilated.<sup>1</sup> The ponderous mass of the enemy swept over the crest, turned the right flank of our line below, and swarmed round the Hampshires and General

Baldwin's column, which had to give ground and were only extricated with great difficulty and very heavy losses."

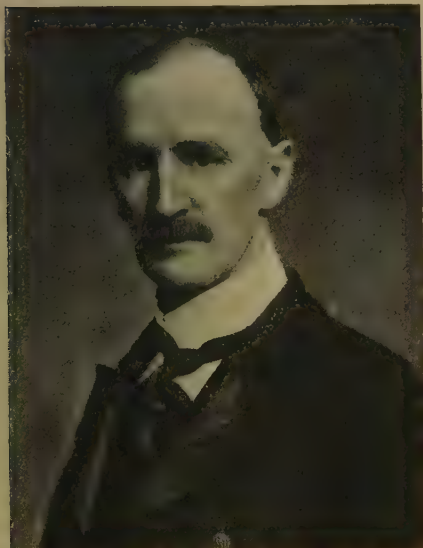
Bent on completely turning the tables on the British troops, the Turks had evidently hoped to cleave a way clean through the invading columns and prevent connection between the Anzac and Suvla Bay armies. But they had forgotten our own artillery and the naval guns. These were now given the chance of a lifetime as the mighty mass, visible to all our artillery and the ships' guns, poured over the vital crest and down the hill on our side with a momentum which, preventing them from recoiling before they were caught in a holocaust of shot and shell, made them pay dearly for their victory on the summit. One battery of machine-guns belonging to the New Zealand Infantry Brigade is described as having played upon those serried ranks at short range until the barrels were red-hot. These alone inflicted enormous losses on the enemy. "Of the swarms which had once fairly crossed the crest line", declares Sir Ian Hamilton, "only the merest handful ever straggled back to their own side of Chunuk Bair."

#### The 2nd Battery New Zealand

<sup>1</sup> Over a fortnight later two exhausted survivors made their way into the British lines, bringing word that five other men of the Wiltshires were still alive at the upper end of the Salzi Beit Valley. The whole party, which had become separated from the regiment during the battle of the 9th, had remained hidden within the enemy's lines for fifteen days, suffering intense privations, and only existing with the utmost difficulty. One of them was Private W. J. Head, who, although himself wounded three times, collected food for his wounded comrades from the bodies of the dead, this being the sole and very slender source of supply. "He displayed", records the *Gazette* in subsequently announcing his award of the D.C.M., "the finest qualities of endurance and leadership in keeping up the spirits of the survivors in the most trying conditions." The two men who, as a forlorn hope,

volunteered to make an attempt to reach the British lines with news of their plight, were Lance-Corporal A. G. Scott and Private R. Humphries, both of whom also received the D.C.M., not only for winning through but also for returning at once, in spite of their exhaustion, as guides to the rescuers. The relieving-party was formed by Captain John W. Greany, of the men's own battalion, and consisted of volunteers from their regiment. Owing to bright moonlight, rifle-fire, and an encounter with a Turkish patrol, it was found impossible to complete the search on the night of August 25-6, but on the following night, when the search was continued, the five survivors were brought in under heavy fire. Captain Greany, who received the D.S.O., also brought back valuable information regarding the country and the enemy's movements.

Field Artillery greatly distinguished itself throughout this and all the varying fortunes of the great adventure. At one time three of its guns were out of action through being hit by bullets, breakages, or other damage, but Bombardier-Fitter D. C. Inglis and Bombardier J. P. Thomson



Brigadier-General R. J. Cooper (member of the London County Council for North Islington), wounded in the Sari Bair Battle

(From a photograph by Elliott & Fry)

managed to get them all in action again and keep them going. To effect this they had on more than one occasion to strip and repair the guns while under heavy fire. Both men were subsequently awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal, which was also conferred on Acting-Sergeant J. T. Hill, of the same battery, "who never hesitated", declares the *Gazette*, "to expose himself to any risk, however great", his bravery and devotion

proving invaluable at a critical period.

Away to the left the Turkish tide had swept with equal fury to the neighbourhood of the farm where General Baldwin was striving to maintain a precarious foothold against forces of the enemy which Sir Ian Hamilton had reckoned would have been held back to meet our advance from Suvla Bay. Round this farm and the spurs to the north-east now ensued a confused, deadly, hand-to-hand struggle, in which many commanding officers were killed, generals fought in the ranks with rifles and bayonets, "and men", to quote from the Commander-in-Chief's report, "dropped their scientific weapons and caught one another by the throat". This fierce conflict was the climax to the four days' fighting for the ridge:

"Portions of our line were pierced and the troops driven clean down the hill. At the foot of the hill the men were rallied by Staff Captain Street, who was there supervising the transport of food and water. Without a word, unhesitatingly, they followed him back to the farm, where they plunged again into the midst of that series of struggles. . . . So desperate a battle cannot be described. The Turks came on again and again, fighting magnificently, calling upon the name of God. Our men stood to it, and maintained, by many a deed of daring, the old traditions of their race. There was no flinching. They died in the ranks where they stood. Here Generals Cayley, Baldwin, and Cooper and all their gallant men achieved great glory. On this bloody field fell Brigadier-General Baldwin, who earned his first laurels on Cæsar's Camp at Ladysmith. There, too, fell Brigadier-General Cooper, badly wounded; and there, too, fell Lieutenant-Colonel M. H. Nunn, commanding the 9th Worcestershire Regiment; Lieutenant-

Colonel H. G. Levinge, commanding the 6th Loyal North Lancashire Regiment; and Lieutenant-Colonel J. Carden, commanding the 5th Wiltshire Regiment."

The absolute last two battalions had to be flung into the fray from the General Reserve before the Turkish tide was stemmed and pressed back again over the Chunuk Bair ridge, the conflict gradually subsiding from the sheer exhaustion of both sides. By night, save wounded and prisoners, no live Turk remained upon our side of the slope.

Elsewhere the enemy had continued his efforts to hurl the Anzacs back on that same 10th of August by attacking our positions along the Asmak Dere and Damakjelic Bair, but both attacks were repulsed with heavy loss by the 4th Australian Brigade and the 4th South Wales Borderers—the New Army troops who, as stated on p. 136, had distinguished themselves under Lieutenant-Colonel Gillespie in the rapid advance of the Left Covering Column in the night attack of August 6-7. Unfortunately, the Borderers lost their intrepid leader in this later fighting of August 10.

At nightfall the combat had died down all along the line, and it only remained to count the cost of the most ferocious and sustained soldiers' battle, as Mr. Ashmead Bartlett described it, since Inkerman. But whereas Inkerman was over in four hours, this titanic conflict with the Turks was maintained by Britons, Australians, New Zealanders, Indians, and Maoris for four consecutive days and nights, "amid hills, dongas, and ravines", adds the same authority,

"900 feet above the sea, to which point all water, rations, and ammunition had to be borne along paths which do not exist, except on the map, and down which every man who fell wounded had to be borne in the almost tropical heat of August in the Mediterranean".

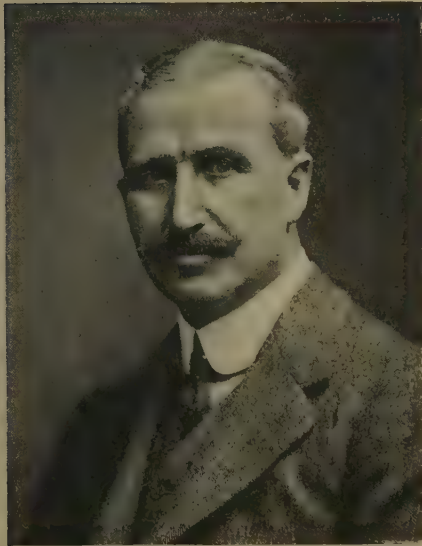
If we had failed in the grand coup, we had forged new links in the Imperial chain which would surely prove of untold value in the future. At one spot, for instance, Mr. Ashmead Bartlett saw "a Colonial, an Englishman, a Maori, and a Gurkha all lying dead side by side, marking the highest point yet reached by the Imperial Forces in the Peninsula". By the evening of the 10th, General Birdwood's total losses had reached 12,000. Half of these had been suffered by Major-General



Lieutenant-Colonel M. H. Nunn, who fell while commanding the 9th Worcestershire Regiment in the Sari Bair Battle

(From a photograph by Gale & Polden)





Lieutenant-Colonel J. Carden, who fell while commanding the 5th Wiltshire Regiment in the Sari Bair Battle  
(From a photograph by Elliott & Fry)

Shaw's 13th Division of the New Army, which alone had lost 6000 out of a grand total of 10,500. Not only General Baldwin, but all his staff, had fallen, and ten commanding officers had disappeared from the fighting effectives. Neither the Warwicks nor the Worcesters had a single officer left. The 29th Brigade of the 10th (Irish) Division of the New Army had also lost more than 50 per cent of its strength; and yet, like the remnants of the 13th Division, was "still game", declared the Commander-in-Chief, "for as much more fighting as might be required". Physically, however, all needed rest and reorganization before renewing the attack.

In summing up, Sir Ian Hamilton absolves Lieutenant-General Birdwood and all the officers and men under his

command from the least blame for the lamentable failure of the grand attack. It was no fault of theirs, he declared, that the Narrows were still out of sight and beyond field-gun range. "No mortal can command success. Lieutenant-General Birdwood had done all that mortal man can do to deserve it"; and the Commander-in-Chief's praise of the conduct throughout of Major-General Godley, commanding the New Zealand and Australian Division, and of Major-General Shaw, commanding the 13th Division of the New Army, was equally unstinted. As for the troops, "the joyous alacrity with which they faced danger, wounds, and death, as if they were some new form of exciting recreation, has astonished me, old campaigner as I am"; and he leaves Major-General Godley to confirm this in the following account of what happened under his own eyes:—

"'I cannot close my report', he says, 'without placing on record my unbounded admiration of the work performed, and the gallantry displayed, by the troops and their leaders during the severe fighting involved in these operations. Though the Australian, New Zealand, and Indian units had been confined to trench duty in a cramped space for some four months, and though the troops of the New Armies had only just landed from a sea voyage, and many of them had not been previously under fire, I do not believe that any troops in the world could have accomplished more. All ranks vied with one another in the performance of gallant deeds, and more than worthily upheld the best traditions of the British Army.'"

The best pendant to this narrative of the Anzacs' share in the great ad-



venture is Sir Ian Hamilton's own order to the troops after the battle, and while he still held command:—

"The Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force desires formally to record the fine feat of arms achieved by the troops under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir W. R. Birdwood during



Major-General F. C. Shaw, commanding the 13th Division of the New Army at Anzac  
(From a photograph by F. A. Swaine)

the battle of Sari Bair. The fervent desire of all ranks to close with the enemy, the impetuosity of their onset, the steadfast valour with which they maintained a long struggle—these will surely make an appeal to their fellow-countrymen all over the world. The gallant capture of the almost impregnable Lone Pine trenches by the Australian Division and the equally gallant defence of the position against repeated counter-attacks are exploits which will live in history. The determined assaults carried out from other parts of the Australian Division's line were

also of inestimable service to the whole force, preventing, as they did, the movement of large bodies of reinforcements to the northern flank.

"The troops under the command of Major-General Sir A. J. Godley, and particularly the New Zealand and Australian Division, were called upon to carry out one of the most difficult military operations that has ever been attempted—a night march and assault by several columns, in intricate mountainous country strongly entrenched and held by a numerous and determined enemy. Their brilliant conduct during this operation and the success they achieved have won for them a reputation as soldiers of whom any country must be proud. To the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps, therefore, and to those who were associated with that famous corps in the battle of Sari Bair—the Maoris, Sikhs, Gurkhas, and the new troops of the 10th and 13th Divisions from the Old Country—Sir Ian Hamilton tenders his appreciation of their efforts, his admiration of their gallantry, and his thanks for their achievements. It is an honour to command a force numbering such men as these in its ranks, and it is the Commander-in-Chief's high privilege to acknowledge that honour."

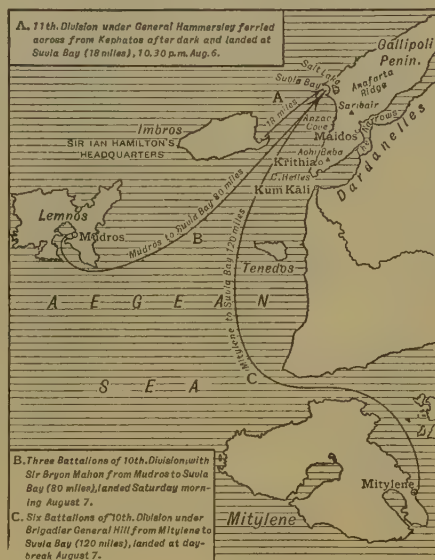
## SUVLA BAY

The scene shifts to Suvla Bay, where it is time to follow the tragic fortunes of the 9th Army Corps—less the 13th Division and the 29th Brigade of the 10th Division, which we have just seen sharing in the battles of Anzac—from the landing onwards. The landing itself on the night of August 6–7 was hailed as a triumph of organization, of which the Royal Navy and Sir Ian Hamilton's General Head-quarters Staff, who worked out every minute detail between them, had reason to be proud. The

Commander-in-Chief expressed his gratitude to both for their remarkable achievement in landing a whole division and three batteries during a single night on a hostile shore, and bringing the first troops of the supporting division from Mitylene, 120 miles away, at the very psychological moment when support was most needed—at dawn on August 7. The complexity of the arrangements not only for the transport of the whole force in submarine-infested waters, but also for the supply of whatever was most needed by units ashore, whether water, food, or ammunition, can be but dimly realized by landsmen sitting at home at ease. It was doubly difficult where everything had to be done without putting the enemy on his guard. Every precaution was taken to ensure that the destination of the troops concentrated at Mudros, Imbros, and Mitylene was kept secret up to the last moment.

The conduct of the whole operations in the Suvla Bay theatre, as already mentioned, had been entrusted to Lieutenant-General the Hon. Sir Frederick W. Stopford, who was Military Secretary to Sir Redvers Buller in the South African War, and had also seen active service in Egypt, the Sudan, and Ashanti. Before the war he was Lieutenant of the Tower of London. The first task of his 9th Army Corps was to seize and hold Zilghin Burnu (locally known as Chocolate Hill) and the Ismail Oglu Hills beyond it, together with the foothills on the north and east of Suvla Bay. Sir Ian Hamilton's information was that the enemy, wholly unsus-

picious about our plans, had left this theatre but lightly guarded. There was no wire. A girdle of trenches was known to exist round Lala Baba, overlooking Suvla Bay, above Beach B, and some unconnected lengths of fire trenches had been discovered on Hill 10 and the heights forming the



Map showing Sir Ian Hamilton's Head-quarters in the Ægean Sea during the battles in three theatres on August 6-7, and the distances covered by the converging armies for the landing in Suvla Bay

northern arm of the bay. It was hoped, with a surprise landing on the night of August 6, that these hills, with their guns, might be in our possession by daybreak the next morning, while the Anzacs were delivering the knock-down blow on the crests of Sari Bair. Sir Ian Hamilton hoped, further, that the first division which landed would be strong enough, in his own words, "to picket and hold all the important heights within artillery range of the

bay, when General Stopford would be able to direct the remainder of his force, as it became available, through the Anafartas to the east of Sari Bair, where it should soon smash the main-string of the Turkish opposition to the Anzacs". A glance at the maps will make this plan clear, and, as far as may be judged thereby, show it to have been sound and feasible.

The distinction of landing first fell to the complete 11th (Northern) Division of the New Army under Major-General F. Hammersley, who, like Lieutenant-General Stopford, had seen service in Egypt, the Sudan, and South Africa. The Royal Navy carried out all the embarkation arrangements at Imbros (Kephalos), where the 11th Division had concentrated, in their usual ship-shape style and, favoured with calm weather, ferried the troops over to the peninsula in destroyers and motor-lighters without mishap or discovery, all lights being dowsed on the journey, and no craft leaving Kephalos Bay before dark (about 9 p.m.). The motor-lighters were new acquisitions since the first landing, and proved invaluable. Moving 5 knots an hour under their own engines, they could carry 500 men each, besides stores of ammunition and water; and, having landed their first freight, could return to the destroyers, and, in one trip, empty them also. This mixed armada of sloops and ketches, motor-lighters and destroyers, and countless other small craft conveying guns, horses, and the thousand-and-one other essentials of an army corps in the field, was completed at a distance by H.M.S. *Endymion* and

H.M.S. *Theseus*, each carrying a thousand men. Originally it had been intended that all three brigades of the 11th Division, beginning their disembarkation at 10.30 p.m., should land on the beach immediately south of Nibrunesi Point, "but in deference to the representations of the Corps Commander", says Sir Ian Hamilton, "I agreed, unfortunately as it turned out, to one brigade being landed inside the bay". The three landing-places finally chosen are designated and shown on the map on p. 155 as Beach A, Beach B, and Beach C.

Meeting with no mischance, the landing began in the impenetrable darkness of that Friday night with clockwork regularity. All three brigades got ashore practically simultaneously, the 32nd and 33rd Brigades



Lieutenant-General the Hon. Sir Frederick W. Stopford,  
in command of the Suvla Bay operations





Major-General F. Hammersley, commanding the 11th (Northern) Division of the New Army at Suvla Bay  
(From a photograph by Lafayette)

at Beaches B and C, and the 34th Brigade at Beach A. The surprise of the Turks, we are told, was complete. Only at Beach A was there any opposition, the landing here being more difficult, because the water was shoal and the enemy on the alert. Inevitable confusion occurred at this point with the grounding of several of the lighters so far out that the heavily accoutred infantry—each carrying two days' supplies—had to wade towards the beach in 4 to 5 feet of water, flanking rifle-fire from the Turkish outposts at Lala Baba and Ghazi Baba adding to their difficulties. Some of the enemy even crept down in the darkness, mingling with our troops on the beach, and getting between our lines and their supports. An end was soon put to these enter-

prising foes, however, by the speedy capture of Lala Baba from the south by the 9th West Yorkshire Regiment and the 6th Yorkshire Regiment, both of the 32nd Brigade, which had landed without opposition at Beach B, and marched up along the coast in first-rate style. Their assault on Lala Baba succeeded at once and without much loss, "but both battalions", as Sir Ian Hamilton says, "deserve great credit for the way in which it was delivered in the inky darkness of the night". It cost the Yorkshires—the "Green Howards"—dearly, however, in the loss of their commander, Lieutenant-Colonel E. H. Chapman, who fell while gallantly leading his men on the very summit of Lala Baba. The 34th Brigade being still in difficulties, held up by another Turkish outpost on Hill 10, the 32nd Brigade was now pushed on to its support.

Most unfortunately, the absence of a real leader on the spot was already being sorely felt. "It is feared", writes Sir Ian Hamilton, "that some of the losses that occurred here were due to misdirected fire". The 11th Manchesters, of the 34th Brigade, had meantime struck northwards with invincible dash, pushing the enemy back along the ridge of the Karakol Dagħ towards the Kiretch Tepe Sirt, and earning the warm eulogy of the Commander-in-Chief:—

"Beyond doubt these Lancashire men earned much distinction, fighting with great pluck and grit against an enemy not very numerous perhaps, but having an immense advantage in knowledge of the ground. As they got level with Hill 10 it grew light enough to see, and the enemy began to



shell. No one seems to have been present who could take hold of the two brigades, the 32nd and 34th, and launch them in a concerted and cohesive attack. Consequently there was confusion and hesitation, increased by gorse fires lit by hostile shell, but redeemed, I am proud to report, by the conspicuously fine, soldierly conduct of several individual battalions. The whole



Lieutenant-General Sir Bryan T. Mahon, commanding the 10th (Irish) Division of the New Army at Suvla Bay  
(From a photograph by Elliott & Fry)

of the Turks locally available were by now in the field, and they were encouraged to counter-attack by the signs of hesitation, but the 9th Lancashire Fusiliers and the 11th Manchester Regiment took them on with the bayonet, and fairly drove them back in disorder over the flaming Hill 10."

It was a proud day for Manchester, and all Lancashire for that matter, in spite of its tragic disappointments, for all the time these men were showing

what the New Army could do, Lieutenant Forshaw was winning his V.C. and saving the vineyard on the Krithia line with his handful of the 9th (Territorial) Battalion of the same Manchester Regiment. Day was now breaking, and, just as they were urgently needed, six battalions of the 10th (Irish) Division sailed into Suvla Bay from Mitylene under Brigadier-General Hill. The remainder of the 10th Division, three battalions, were on their way from Mudros, under the General Officer Commanding, Lieutenant-General Sir Bryan Mahon, who led the Mafeking Relief Column in 1900, and won the D.S.O. in Egypt. General Stopford's plan had been to keep the 10th Division on the left of the 11th, pushing it forward as far as possible along the Kiretch Tepe Sirt towards the heights above Ejelmer Bay. For this reason he desired to land the first six battalions of the 10th Division at Beach A. Seeing Brigadier-General Hill, as Sir Ian Hamilton informs us, he told him that as the left of the 34th Brigade was being hard pressed, he should get into touch with Major-General Hammersley, commanding the 11th Division, and work in support of his left until the arrival of his own Divisional General, Sir Bryan Mahon. According to General Stopford, however, the naval authorities were unwilling to land these new battalions at Beach A, "for some reason not specified", says Sir Ian Hamilton, but presumably because of the difficulties already discovered by the 34th Brigade. The six battalions were therefore sent in lighters to Beach C, whence they were marched



The Landing at Suvla Bay: British Reserves on the beach between Cape Suvla and Salt Lake awaiting the order to advance

by Lala Baba to Hill 10 under fire. "Hence were caused loss, delay, and fatigue. Also the angle of direction from which these fresh troops entered the fight was not nearly so effective."

It was the beginning of a series of mishaps which told heavily against the success of the operations. The 31st Brigade of the 10th (Irish) Division plunged into the action, not as General Stopford had intended, on the left of the 11th Division, but between Hill 10 and what is called on the map Salt Lake—in summer little but a stretch of salt-crustured uneven desert—while the 34th and 32nd Brigades of the 11th Division were pursuing the retreating Turks towards Sulajik and Kuchuk Anafarta Ova. Meantime the remainder of the 10th Division began to arrive from Mudros with Lieutenant-General Sir Bryan Mahon, and were landed near Ghazi Baba. The original idea was that both brigades of the Irish Division would be able to rendezvous about half a mile to the north-west of Hill 10. As we have seen, however, the 31st Brigade, comprising the 6th Inniskilling Fusiliers and the 6th Royal Irish Fusiliers, with the 6th Royal Dublin Fusiliers attached, had already entered the fight between Hill 10 and Salt Lake. Obviously something had gone wrong with the staff work at the very beginning. Exactly what happened from this point is difficult to trace in the published account and dispatches. "I have failed in my endeavours to get some live human detail about the fighting which followed," wrote Sir Ian Hamilton, but he understood from General Stopford that the brunt

of it had fallen upon the New Army regiments of the 31st (Irish) Brigade.

In spite of the initial confusion, the advance for a time promised to be glorious, and even triumphant. The enemy was driven from Hill 10 right back out of rifle range from the beaches; General Hammersley seized Zilghin Burnu (Chocolate Hill) early in the afternoon—the 6th Lincoln Regiment and the 6th Border Regiment especially distinguishing themselves in this action—and Sir Bryan Mahon, advancing northwards in spirited fashion along the Kiretch Tepe Sirt, in support of the 11th Manchesters, had firmly established himself on the ridge. In front of him he reported the enemy to be strongly entrenched. The whole of this advance, said the Commander-in-Chief, had been well carried out by the Irishmen—the 6th Royal Munster Fusiliers winning special distinction—over difficult ground against an enemy, consisting of 500 to 700 Gendarmerie (all picked troops), favoured by the lie of the land. This was Sir Bryan Mahon's position at sundown, by which time General Hammersley's troops, with the 31st Brigade of the Irish Division, were extended from about Hetman Chair—in the direction of Damakjelik Bair, where Travers's Left Covering Column of the New Army, with the Anzacs, had been holding out its hand in eager expectation all day—through the Chocolate Hills and Sulajik to near Kuchuk Anafarta Ova. General Hammersley's vital point, however, was Hill 100 (Ismail Oglu Tepe), guarding the gap leading up to the fair village of Bijuk Anafarta, lying surrounded by stately



cypress-trees some 3 miles to the east of Salt Lake; but the commander of the 11th Division reported that evening that he was unable to make any further progress. It had been an exhausting day for new troops who had never been in action before,

He had secured portable receptacles for 100,000 gallons, including petrol tins, milk cans, camel tanks, water bags, and pakhals, with full lighters and water ships, which the navy had undertaken to bring regularly to the shore to replace the empty ones. The



From an Official Photograph

The Water Problem in the Gallipoli Campaign: Cleaned petrol cans and other covered cans filled with filtered water and ready for the firing-line

fighting through tropical heat in a country with which they were entirely unfamiliar, and suffering intensely from lack of water.

The Commander-in-Chief had taken special precautions to guard against the obvious danger of a water famine, in the event of the local wells proving inadequate or useless, knowing that his whole plan must fail unless a continuous supply could be counted upon.

responsibility of the army was confined to the emptying of the lighters and the distribution of the water to the troops. This distribution, as Sir Ian Hamilton admits, was a matter of great difficulty, demanding not only well-worked-out schemes from Corps and Divisional Commanders, but also energy and experience on the part of those who had to execute them.

"As it turned out," he adds, "and judg-



ing merely by results, I regret to say that the measures actually taken in regard to the distribution proved to be inadequate, and that suffering and disorganization ensued. The disembarkation of artillery horses was therefore at once, and rightly, postponed by the Corps Commander, in order that mules might be landed to carry up water."

This lack of water and the overpowering heat caused much suffering to raw troops advancing against a determined enemy over trying ground. Except at the southernmost extremity of the Kiretch Tepe Sirt ridge there was no water in that part of the field, and though it appears to have existed in some abundance throughout the area over which the 11th Division was operating, General Stopford reported that there was no time to develop its resources. By the evening many hundreds of men, half-dead from thirst, had already dropped out of the ranks. Some had pierced the hose carrying the water from the beach to tanks inland. All were unused to the hardships of an atrociously exhausting campaign, in which every physical advantage rested with a warlike and resourceful enemy. General Stopford, however, realizing, as the Commander-in-Chief adds, "the vast issues which hung upon his success in forestalling the enemy, urged his Divisional Commanders to push on. Otherwise, as he saw, all the advantages of the surprise landing must be nullified." But the Divisional Commanders believed themselves unable to move, urging that their men were worn out by their efforts through the previous night and the action throughout the

ensuing day, with its want of water and disorganization after the landing. Their pleas for delay were perfectly well-founded, but Sir Ian Hamilton criticizes the policy which overlooked "that the half-defeated Turks in front of us were equally exhausted and disorganized, and that an advance was the simplest and swiftest method of solving the water trouble, and every other sort of trouble".

Some day all the facts will be made known about this lost opportunity on the night of August 7 and the daylight hours of the following day, but until the promised enquiry has taken place—demanded by General Stopford but postponed until after the war—we must rely chiefly upon the published dispatch of the Commander-in-Chief, who has himself admitted his failure to obtain "live human detail" about the initial fighting. The objections of the Corps Commanders, which overbore General Stopford's resolution in the first place, were confirmed by the delay in the landing of the artillery. It was this that finally decided him to "acquiesce in a policy of going slow which, by the time it reached the troops, became translated into a period of inaction". The lessons of the Western Front, it seems, had been taken too much to heart. Neuve Chapelle and Festubert had emphasized the predominance of artillery in modern warfare and the cost of advancing beyond its shattering curtain of fire. Normally this undoubtedly held good, but, as Sir Ian Hamilton pointed out, the order has to be inverted in the case of a landing on a hostile shore. Here the infantry must



After the Suvla Bay Landing: Approximate Positions of General Stopford's Divisions on the night of August 7, 1915

The position at sundown on August 7, after the landing at Suvla Bay, was that the 10th (Irish) Division of the New Army had firmly established itself along the Kiretch Tepe Sirt in the north, while the 11th (Northern) Division of the New Army, with the 31st Brigade of the Irish Division, extended from near Kuchuk Anafarta Ova and Sulajik, through the Chocolate Hill and Green Hill, to about Hetman Chair—not far north of Damakjelik Bair, seized in the early hours of the same morning by Travers's Left Covering Column of the New Army, with the Anzacs. The 11th Division's vital point, however, was Hill 100 (Ismail Oglu Tepe), which guards the gap leading up to the village of Biyuk Anafarta. Its commander reported that evening (August 7) that his troops were too exhausted to make any further progress. It was not until the early hours of August 9 that a fresh advance was begun, by which time the Turks had brought up huge reinforcements, and made good the key of their position. The capture of the Anafarta heights simultaneously with the Anzacs' arrival on the crests of Sari Bair would have brought victory within sight on both fronts. The two positions are tactically interdependent. One cannot be held without the other.

return to her old rôle as the queen of battles and the principal arm, first seizing a suitable position for the landing and then providing artillery positions for the main thrust. The very existence of a landing force depends on the power of the infantry instantly to make good sufficient ground without the aid of the artillery other than can be supplied for the purpose by floating batteries.

This essential area had not been won by nightfall of August 7, 1915. The great guns of the ships were ready to speak at General Stopford's request; three batteries had been got ashore—two of them mountain batteries; and the few Turkish guns which had been in action during the day had been withdrawn lest they should be captured in the British advance. Yet our Divisional Generals, apparently, were informed that, "in view of the inadequate artillery support", General Stopford did not wish them to make any frontal attacks on entrenched positions—"as for the entrenched positions," Sir Ian Hamilton subsequently remarks, "these, in the ordinary acceptance of the term, were non-existent"—but desired them, as far as possible, to turn any trenches met with. "Within the terms of this instruction", Sir Ian declares, "lies the root of our failure to make use of the priceless daylight hours of the 8th of August."

That day the Commander-in-Chief himself went to Suvla, convinced from General Stopford's reports that all was not well there, and, warned by his own General Staff Officer, whom he had sent on early in the morning,

that we were losing golden opportunities through the inaction of our troops, in spite of the apparent weakness of the enemy, the absence of hostile guns, and the small amount of rifle-fire. Leaving his Chief of the General Staff, Major-General W. P. Braithwaite, in charge at General Head-quarters at Imbros, with instructions to keep him closely informed of events at the other two fronts, Sir Ian Hamilton took ship, and arrived at Suvla about 5 p.m., finding the head-quarters of the 9th Corps on board H.M.S. *Jonquil*. Here General Stopford assured him that Major-General Hammersley, commanding the 11th Division, was confident of success in an attack he had planned for dawn on the following (Monday) morning, August 9.

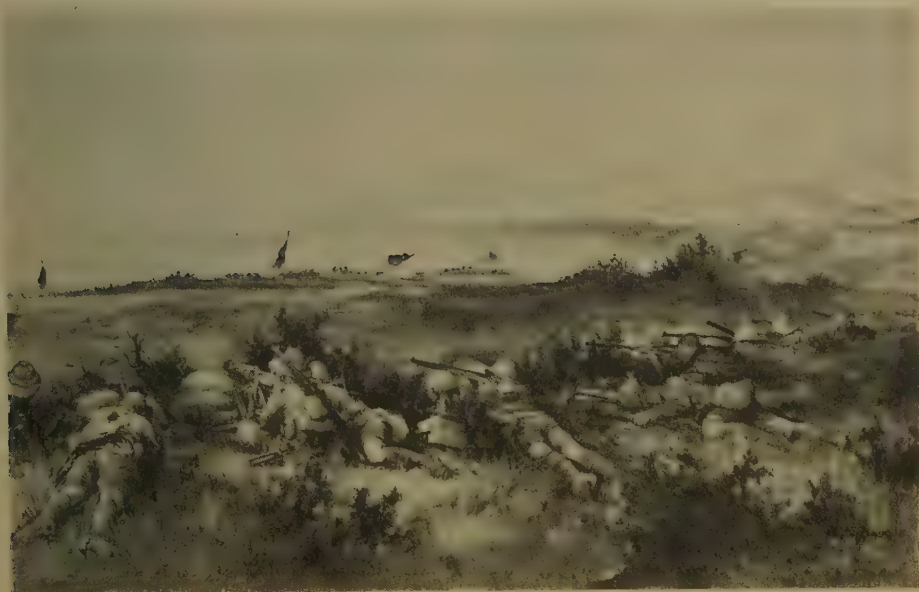
"I felt no such confidence," writes the Commander-in-Chief tartly. "Beyond a small advance by part of the 11th Division between the Chocolate Hills and Ismail Oglu Tepe, and some further progress along the Kiretch Tepe Sirt ridge by the 10th Division, the day of the 8th had been lost. The commander of the 11th Division had, it seems, ordered strong patrols to be pushed forward so as to make good all the strong positions in advance which could be occupied without serious fighting; but, as he afterwards reported, 'little was done in this respect'. Thus a priceless twelve hours had already gone to help the chances of the Turkish reinforcements which were, I knew, both from naval and aerial sources, actually on the march for Suvla. But when I urged that even now, at the eleventh hour, the 11th Division should make a concerted attack upon the hills, I was met by a *non possumus*. The objections of the morning were no longer valid; the men were now well rested, watered, and fed. But the divisional commanders disliked the



idea of an advance by night, and General Stopford did not care, it seemed, to force their hands."

It is a crushing criticism, but it has been argued that in thus throwing the onus of failure on his lieutenants Sir Ian Hamilton criticizes no one more severely than himself. A truly great

ashore—the Corps Commander declaring that if he could get over the representations made by the Divisional Commanders no one would be more pleased than himself—he saw Major-General Hammersley, and warned him that the sands were running out fast: that if he waited for dawn the ground



Drawn by Christopher Clark

Fighting the Enemy in Gallipoli: Turkish Troops surging forward under their Crescent Banners

commander, knowing the paramount importance of time, would, it is urged, have issued peremptory orders to save the situation, and seen that they were carried out. Judgment on this and other crucial points must, however, be left to be delivered hereafter by experts with all the evidence before them.

When Sir Ian Hamilton, after meeting General Stopford, decided to make a personal effort to expedite matters

to his front might very likely be occupied by the enemy in force. General Hammersley admitted the danger, but declared it to be physically impossible at that hour (6 p.m.) to convey orders to his scattered forces for a night attack. "There was no other difficulty, but this was insuperable; he could not recast his orders or get them round to his troops in time." One brigade, however, General Hammersley admitted, was in a position to act



at once. This was the 32nd Brigade, and Sir Ian Hamilton ordered its advance at the earliest possible moment, so that a portion at least of the 11th Division should succeed in forestalling the enemy on the commanding heights in front.

"In taking upon myself the serious responsibility of thus dealing with a detail of divisional tactics I was careful to limit the scope of the interference. Beyond directing that the one brigade which was reported ready to move at once should try and make good the heights before the enemy got on to them I did nothing, and said not a word calculated to modify or in any way affect the attack already planned for the morning."

Sir Ian Hamilton's explanation speaks for itself. In spite of his direct order that the 32nd Brigade was to move at the earliest possible moment, he subsequently established the fact that it did not actually begin its advance until four o'clock on the following morning. The reason given was that the various units were scattered. The result was that the enemy, after all, was able to anticipate them and make good the key of his position. One company of the 6th East Yorks managed to reach the summit of the hill north of Anafarta Sagir, commanding the whole battlefield, but the remainder of the 32nd Brigade, attacked from both flanks during their advance, were forced back with heavy losses to a line north and south of Sulajik. That evening the strength of the 6th East Yorks Pioneer Battalion alone was reduced to 9 officers and 380 men. Very few of the leading company, or the Royal Engineers with it, got back.

If only the whole division had started at 4 a.m. instead of this solitary brigade! Or better still at 9 p.m. on the previous night! That at least is the melancholy reflection of the Commander-in-Chief, who held it reasonable to suppose that in either case the troops would have made good the whole of the heights in front of them. The single brigade which started at 4 a.m. got much farther, and met with less opposition than the rest of General Hammersley's division which moved at dawn, while the Anzacs, far away to the right, were gaining the crest of Chunuk Bair.

It is idle to continue speculating on the many might-have-beens of these unfortunate operations, but there is no doubt that the capture of the Anafarta heights simultaneously with the Anzacs' arrival on the crest of Chunuk would have brought victory within sight on both fronts. The two positions, as Colonel Blood pointed out in the *Quarterly Review*, are tactically interdependent. One cannot be occupied and held without the other.

Watching General Hammersley's main attack, Sir Ian Hamilton soon saw only too well that his worst fears had been realized. The Turks, their shaken confidence restored by the long delay in our offensive, had brought back their guns, as well as reinforcements, and held the vital points in strength. Small wonder that the Commander-in-Chief describes this bitter realization as "a bad moment". Our attack—no attempt is made to disguise the fact—was a lamentable failure. The enemy's well-sustained, enfilading shrapnel fire, "so silent the

previous day", proved especially destructive and demoralizing. Some of the units acquitted themselves with outstanding bravery. General Stopford, in particular, praises one freshly-landed battalion of the 53rd (Territorial) Division—the 1/1st Herefordshire—which advanced "with impetuosity and courage" on the extreme right, between Hetman Chair and Kaslar Chair, about Azmak Dere. Elsewhere the rain of shrapnel threw back our attack time after time just as it seemed on the point of making good.

At first the 33rd Brigade made promising progress in a dashing assault on Hill 100 (Ismail Oglu Tepe). Some, like the Gurkhas and South Lancashires on the crowning heights of Sari Bair, gained the crest and, killing the Turks on top, were able to command a fleeting view of the other side. But then, for some disputed reason, the centre seemed to give way. Whether, says Sir Ian Hamilton, this was the result of the shrapnel fire, or whether, as some say, an order to retire came up from the rear, the result was equally fatal to success. The retreat of the centre, harassed and hampered by scrub fires on Hill 70 and thereabouts, was redeemed by the steadiness and gallantry of the 6th Battalion Border Regiment and 6th Battalion Lincoln Regiment on each flank.

It was during this critical period that Captain Percy Howard Hansen, of the 6th Lincolns, won the Victoria Cross. Green Hill, close to Hill 70, had been twice captured, but the 6th Lincolns were at length forced to retire owing to the intense heat from the

burning scrub. Unfortunately some of the wounded had been left behind, but when the retirement had been effected, Captain Hansen, on his own initiative, and with three or four volunteers, dashed forward several times some 300 to 400 yards over open ground under a terrific fire, and succeeded in rescuing from inevitable death by burning no fewer than six wounded men. Lance-Corporal A. H. Breece, of the same battalion, was one of the volunteers who accompanied him, and received the D.C.M. for displaying a courage and devotion beyond all praise. Two D.C.M.'s fell to the 6th Battalion Border Regiment, one to Sergeant (acting Company-Sergeant-Major) C. Gibson, who displayed invaluable power of command and leadership at a dangerous moment, rallying and bringing forward to the assistance of the company a mixed body of men who had lost their officers. Later in the day he ventured fearlessly beyond our lines under heavy fire to bandage and give water to his wounded comrades. The other D.C.M. for the Border battalion was won by Private J. Litherland, who gave an equally inspiring exhibition of initiative and leadership. After the officer and all the non-commissioned officers of his platoon had been killed or wounded, Private Litherland assumed the command, and, in the words of the *Gazette*, "led it with the greatest courage and success".

Falling back before the Turks, the 32nd Brigade took up the line north and south through Sulajik, its left protected by two battalions of the 34th Brigade, which came up in support—

a timely return for the help rendered to the 34th Brigade by the 32nd on the morning of the landing on Beach A. Later on, the line was prolonged by the remainder of the 34th Brigade and two battalions of the 159th Brigade of the 53rd (Territorial) Division, the right being connected with the Chocolate Hills by the 33rd Brigade, which had returned there after its repulse from the upper slopes of Ismail Oglu Tepe. Such was the ugly position of affairs on the Sunday night, the rest of the 53rd Division having meantime arrived at Suvla as reinforcements. This Territorial division constituted Sir Ian Hamilton's general reserve, and he had ordered it up as a sort of forlorn hope, that its added strength in infantry might still turn the scales in our favour. No artillery, it should be added, had accompanied it from Britain.

On the Tuesday (August 10), when General Stopford desired to make a fresh assault on the Anafarta ridge, the 11th Division still stood urgently in need of rest after its nerve-shaking experiences, and acted only in support of the attack, which was left to the Territorials of the 53rd Division under General Lindley—all perfectly green troops, save for the battalions which had landed in time to take part in the trying operations of the previous day. Many of the units, it is recorded, fought in this fresh attempt with great gallantry, and were led forward with much devotion by their officers, but the task was beyond their power.

"The attack failed," writes Sir Ian Hamilton, "though the Corps Commander considers that seasoned troops would have

succeeded, especially as the enemy were showing signs of being shaken by our artillery fire [now consisting of one brigade of Royal Field Artillery, with two mountain batteries and the ships' guns]. General Stopford points out, however, and rightly so, that the attack was delivered over very difficult country, and that it was a high trial for troops who had never been in action before, and with no regulars to set a standard."

The enemy, on the other hand, who knew every inch of the ground by heart, was three times as strong as on the 7th, and had been ably commanded throughout. Our forward movement, designed to support the main attack from Anzac, where it had been so urgently needed, was thus brought to a standstill after an advance of about two and a half miles. Further progress for the time being proving impracticable, orders were issued to General Stopford to entrench a line across the whole front from near Azmak Dere, through the knoll east of Chocolate Hill, to the ground still held by Sir Bryan Mahon's 10th (Irish) Division about Kiretch Tepe Sirt. Two days elapsed without further progress, General Stopford meantime reorganizing his forces, and the enemy evidently preferring to await our next move rather than attempt in turn to attack the strong positions we had now taken up. These, according to prisoners captured, were regarded both by Turkish and German officers as practically impregnable.

On Thursday, August 12, Sir Ian Hamilton proposed that the 54th Division (infantry only, like the 53rd Division), which had landed the day before and been placed in reserve,

should renew the offensive with a night march in order to attack at dawn on the 13th the heights of Kavak Tepe—Teke Teke, above Anafarta Sagir. General Stopford paved the way for this by sending the 163rd Brigade in advance, during the afternoon of the 12th, in order to ensure an unopposed march for the rest of the division as far as Kuchuk Anafarta Ova. Here the enemy was

ensure the success of an attack which causes them to lose touch with officers and comrades, and leaves them unhesitatingly to take the right course in wholly abnormal circumstances.

The 163rd Brigade had only set foot on the Peninsula the day before, but, nothing dismayed, it succeeded in the face of serious opposition in establishing itself about what is officially described as "the A of Anafarta



Attacking the Anafarta Hills: British Infantry from Suvla Bay advancing across the dried-up Salt Lake under fire. (From one of Mr. Ashmead Bartlett's photographs)

known to be gathered in strength, in country which, as the foothills were approached, partook more and more of a forest character, thick with stunted oaks and scrub, and intersected with water-worn ravines. It was an appalling region to fight in, save to the enemy, who gained every advantage it had to give. Like so much of the terrain in the neighbourhood, it made very open order essential in any advance, thus putting the severest test upon the self-reliance and initiative of the individual soldier. It needs troops with the true military instinct and highly trained in skirmishing to

(118 m. 4 and 7), in difficult and enclosed country". It was in the course of this fight, "creditable in all respects to the 163rd Brigade", writes the Commander-in-Chief, that the 1/5th Norfolk Territorials, pushing ahead with a reckless courage which deserved a happier fate, were swallowed up in the woods and seen no more. Their disappearance was a mystery to which Sir Ian Hamilton refers as follows:—

"The 1/5th Norfolks were on the right of the line, and found themselves for a moment less strongly opposed than the rest of the brigade. Against the yielding forces





The Lost Battalion in the Suva Bay Operations: Officers of the 1/5 (Territorial) Norfolk Regiment, sixteen of whom, with Colonel Sir Horace G. Beauchamp, charged with their men and were lost in the forest. (From a photograph by Bassano)

*Back Row* (left to right): Lieut. T. Oliphant, Lieut. V. M. Cubitt, Lieut. G. W. Birkbeck, Second Lieut. Granville Beauchamp, Second Lieut. A. G. Culme-Seymour, Capt. A. H. Mason, Lieut. Alec Beck, Lieut. E. Gay, Capt. A. C. M. Coxon, Capt. E. R. Woodward, Second Lieut. M. F. Oliphant. *Middle Row*: Lieut. Evelyn Beck, Capt. E. R. Cubitt, Capt. A. D. Patrick, Major W. J. Barton, Col. Sir Horace G. P. Beauchamp, Bart., C.B., Capt. and Adj. A. E. M. Ward (the Norfolk Regiment). *Front Row*: Capt. A. Knight, M.V.O., Second Lieut. W. G. S. Fawkes, Second Lieut. W. James, Second Lieut. S. C. Larn, Second Lieut. M. B. Buxton, Second Lieut. A. R. Pelly.

of the enemy Colonel Sir H. Beauchamp, a bold, self-confident officer, eagerly pressed forward, followed by the best part of the battalion. The fighting grew hotter, and the ground became more wooded and broken. At this stage many men were wounded or grew exhausted with thirst. These found their way back to camp during the night. But the Colonel, with 16 officers and 250 men, still kept pushing on, driving the enemy before him. Amongst these ardent souls was part of a fine company enlisted from the King's Sandringham estates. Nothing more was ever seen or heard of any of them. They charged into the forest, and were lost to sight or sound. Not one of them ever came back."

Sir Horace G. Beauchamp, C.B., sixth holder of a Norfolk baronetcy dating from the first half of the eighteenth century, was a veteran of the

Sudan, Suakin, and South African campaigns who had retired in 1904. The Sandringham Company was under Captain Frank R. Beck, M.V.O., His Majesty's agent, who had taken command when it was first formed some ten years previously as part of the old 3rd Volunteer Battalion of the Norfolk Regiment, and he still retained the position on the outbreak of war. He was among "those ardent souls" who disappeared that day, together, among others, with Lieutenant A. E. A. Beck, Second-Lieutenant M. B. G. Beauchamp, Captain E. R. and Lieutenant V. M. Cubitt, and Lieutenant T. and Second-Lieutenant M. F. Oliphant, all kinsmen as well as brother-officers of the same gallant battalion.

The night march and subsequent attack planned by Sir Ian Hamilton to follow this preliminary advance of the 163rd Brigade were now, it seems, abandoned owing to General Stopford's representations as to the difficulties of keeping the division supplied with food, water, &c., even should it succeed in gaining the heights. Plans were then prepared for combined operations with the forces at Anzac, but General Birdwood's hopes and plans had been so grievously upset by the costly disappointments of the previous fighting that he could only help the 9th Corps, he found, with one brigade from Damakjelik Bair. Sir Ian Hamilton was accordingly obliged to abandon all idea for the time being of further progress, directing General Stopford to confine his attention to straightening out the line across his present front, and himself forwarding

to Lord Kitchener an urgent cable to the effect that the only way to bring the campaign to a quick, vigorous conclusion was to send out large reinforcements at once.

On the day before Sir Ian sent this message General Stopford gave his last orders as Commander of the 9th Army Corps. In accordance with the Commander-in-Chief's instructions to straighten out the line, he ordered Sir Bryan Mahon to advance his 10th (Irish) Division so as to gain possession of the crest of the Kiretch Tepe Sirt in co-operation with the 54th Division. A frontal attack along the high ridge to the left was accordingly delivered by the 30th and 31st Infantry Brigades of the Irish Division, supported on the right by the 162nd Infantry Brigade of the 54th Division, and seconded by the naval guns of H.M.S. *Grampus* and *Foxhound* from



With the 9th Corps at Suvla Bay: Troops mustering after landing on one of the beaches  
(From one of Mr. Ashmead Bartlett's photographs)

the Gulf of Saros, as well as by a machine-gun detachment of the Royal Naval Air Service, the Argyll Mountain Battery, the 15th Heavy Battery, and the 58th Field Battery. Some hours of indecisive artillery and musketry fighting were crowned at last by a triumphant charge of the 6th Royal Dublin Fusiliers, who, dashing forward with ringing cheers, carried the whole ridge, together with a number of prisoners. Unfortunately the triumph, as so often happened in this luckless campaign, was soon turned to tragedy and failure.

"The point of the ridge", says Sir Ian Hamilton, "was hard to hold, and means for maintaining the forward trenches had not been well thought out. Casualties became very heavy, the 5th Royal Irish Fusiliers having only one officer left, and the 5th Inniskilling Fusiliers also losing heavily in officers. Reinforcements were promised, but before they could arrive the officer left in command decided to evacuate the front trenches. The strength of the Turks opposed to us was steadily rising, and had now reached 20,000."

That evening General Stopford handed over command of the 9th Corps, but Sir Ian Hamilton remained confident that with a prompt and an adequate supply of drafts and munitions he could still clear a passage for a fleet to Constantinople. "To be repulsed is not to be defeated"; he has written, "so long as the commander and his troops are game to renew the attack"; and there was no doubt about the gameness in this case. "Such is the amazing quality and warlike spirit of the British soldier and seamen", wrote a wounded officer at the close of the operations just described, "that

when I left they were all longing to have another go at the enemy." In this they were not to be disappointed; but the later advance never had the same chance of success as the first, where the golden advantage of surprise had, on Sir Ian Hamilton's showing, been squandered to little or no purpose. Nor were the needed rein-



Major-General H. de Beauvoir de Lisle, in temporary command of the 9th Army Corps in succession to General Stopford

(From a photograph by Elliott & Fry)

forcements forthcoming. The great September offensive on the Western front was now in the making, and the troops demanded by Sir Ian Hamilton could not be spared. The result will be seen in a later chapter, bringing the last phase of this hapless campaign to a close. Meantime we leave Major-General Henry de Beauvoir De Lisle in temporary command of the 9th Army Corps at Suvla. Sir Ian Hamilton had summoned him from Cape Helles because of his personal experience of Turkish methods



and of the paramount importance of time. At Helles, in command of the famous 29th Division, he had proved his powers of clear, strong leadership, as he had proved them with the cavalry on the Western front in the earlier phases of the war—in the retreat from Mons, in the Battle of the Marne, and in the Second Battle of Ypres, where he commanded the Cavalry Corps in the trenches. None of the senior

commanders at Suvla had had personal experience either of trench warfare under modern conditions or of Turco-German methods. This fact, and the use of raw troops suddenly flung into a tremendous battle in a wild, waterless country to which they were wholly unaccustomed, were among the fundamental reasons for the whole tragic failure of Suvla Bay.

F. A. M.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE PROBLEM OF THE NEAR EAST

*Drang nach Osten*—Germany and Encirclement—The Ottoman Empire and the Way Out—The Value of Constantinople—The Ethnological Mixture of the Balkans—Turks and Slavs—Greek Independence—Greater Greece and Britain—Crete and Venizelos—Macedonia and Thrace—Serbia and her History—The Slovenes and Croats—Bulgaria and her Debt to Russia—Roumania—The Danubian Principalities—John Bratiano—Russia and Roumania in the Russo-Turkish War—Retrocession of Bessarabia—Roumanian Ambitions—The Albanians—Italy, Montenegro, and the Adriatic—Serb and Bulgar—Balkan States and Federation—Fall of Abdul Hamid in 1908—Venizelos, Gueshoff, and the Balkan League—The First Balkan War with Turkey—Results of the War and the Negotiations—London Peace Conference—Bulgaria's Attack on Serbia and Greece—The Treaty of Bucharest.

IF the causes of the war could be compressed into phrase, it might be found in the expression the *Drang nach Osten*, the "thrust towards the East", which is the aim of German ambitions, and the necessity of German capital and industrialism. When Germany protested in excuse for her crime against civilization that she was menaced with encirclement, one meaning was read into the expression by her governing classes, another by her commercial and working classes. The military party dreamed of a Greater Germany expanded from the North Sea to the Ægean by force of arms; and was aware that such a

dream could never be realized while Great Britain opposed her establishment in Belgium, or while an awakening Russia contested with her the chief influence in the Balkan States, and threatened to shut her out for ever from Constantinople. The creation of strong Balkan States living on amicable terms with one another would have formed an insuperable bar to any *Drang nach Osten* from a military or political standpoint, more especially as such a block would have received the support of Russia. If the Balkan States had confederated, the block would have been impassable. From a commercial and capi-



talistic point of view "encirclement" had another aspect. Germany had been profoundly industrialized. The organization which had welded industries, railways, banks, and the fiscal system together into an engine of cheap production had been too great for its markets. Germany was in the position of a firm which had to sell the articles it produced by the million in order to make a profit. The surplusage of manufactured goods involved her in a loss. Hence the necessity of new colonies in which the goods could be dumped.

It is evident that not every colony will answer the purpose of a receptacle. Swamps and wastes in Africa do not breed purchasers of synthetic dyes or electric fittings; the man-eaters of German New Guinea do not consume steel rails. Such places want money spent on them for development. Germany had capital to spend; but it could not be spared for small profits and slow returns, and the places in the sun where magnificent dividends on German capital could be earned were barred to her because they were occupied by other nations. That is what the capitalists and the industrial classes understood by encirclement; and it was to them a very real thing, because the majority of the industrial and working classes, notwithstanding the splendour of Germany's industrial fabric, were poor. Out of this encirclement there was one way—the way to the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire was better than any colony, though in the course of time it might become a German one. Its political and economic development

were centuries behind, and by that reason would furnish to German exploitation, "concessions", mines, cultivable lands, the opportunities for railways, bridges, and all the varied and suitable openings for German capital. At the same time, Turkey in Europe and Turkey in Asia would be near and convenient markets for German manufactured products, for which Germany, by the imposition of a suitable tariff, would take care that she got proper prices. Moreover, there are many natural products in Turkey over which Germany would be able to assume control, and which would supply German industries with cheap raw material. In short, the Ottoman Empire was to Germany a colony at her doors, better than any colony overseas, a Java and an India rolled into one.

Turkey was the great prize for which all of her neighbours competed, and from which most of them in recent times had plucked a feather. Germany wished to swallow the whole bird. Of the other Great Powers, Russia was the one whose interests were most in conflict with those of Germany. Britain was always satisfied with Turkey's retention of her position on either side of the Dardanelles, so long as a standard of decent government and administration was maintained, for from the point of view of a naval Power Constantinople could hardly be in more inoffensive keeping. France's interests as a Mediterranean Power were equally well suited by leaving Turkey in possession; and those of Italy were concentrated in the Adriatic.

On the other hand, Constantinople is a position of supreme value to an aggressive state. A strong military power at that incomparable meeting place of seas and continents would change at once the whole situation in the Balkans and in Asia Minor; while Constantinople as a naval base would

many. But if once the German military and naval power choked the entrance to the Black Sea, Russia would slowly stifle within her dominions, until and unless her millions of people were militarized to the point of provoking an Armageddon even greater than the one which broke out



The Heart of the Ottoman Empire: Stamboul and the Golden Horn

threaten every Mediterranean Power. But Russia had an interest in Constantinople which transcended that of every other European Power, as the war soon proved. The closing of the Dardanelles shut out the passage of her exports of wheat from the Black Sea; it prevented the import of necessities through the one warm-water port in all her Empire. The encirclement of Russia, despite her vastness, is more constricted than that of Ger-

many. It would intensify and aggravate that Eastern Question which during the nineteenth century was a struggle between Russia and Turkey, and by comparison was a local conflict. Racially the antagonism between Russia and Turkey was neither local nor in any sense insignificant.

The Turks, who in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had overrun Europe, and when the last Stuart was on the English throne were knocking

at the gates of Vienna, were in the nineteenth century struggling to keep a hold on the Balkan Peninsula, which extended as far north as the Carpathians. In this peninsula was a welter of races the constituents of which none but an anthropologist could disentangle, for not even the Greeks are a pure race,

donian or Thracian blood. But this inextricable blend of races, of which the Bulgars are the hardest knot, has so well-defined a Slav element in each of its constituents that it is with justice described in general terms as Slav. Over this Slav population the Turk, till well into the nineteenth century,

Scutari

Bosphorus

Galata



Stamboul

The "City of the Faithful": General View of Constantinople

but a mixture of Slavonians, Turanians, and Illyrians. The Bulgarians are Finnish as well as Slav; the Serbians are purer Slav; the Albanians are Illyrians crossed with Slav and Greek; the Black Wallachs of Montenegro and Herzegovina are Illyric-Slav; the Roumanians have the debris of the Thracians, and are otherwise Romanized Dacians, Slavs, and Wallachs, who are the descendants of the old Roman provincials, perhaps of Mace-

donian or Thracian blood. But this inextricable blend of races, of which the Bulgars are the hardest knot, has so well-defined a Slav element in each of its constituents that it is with justice described in general terms as Slav. Over this Slav population the Turk, till well into the nineteenth century,

ruled with the appearance of success. They treated the Christians as inferiors, but they recognized their religion, their language, and even their corporate organization. It was possible for Bulgarian and Greek villages to live side by side. But when Turkish military power began to decline, the government of these Christian subjects became difficult; and it was made no easier by the interference of Western Powers in



Turkey's internal government and the encouragement they gave to resistance. There first was heard, sometimes from strange quarters, the demand for the rights of small nationalities and of peoples rightly struggling to be free. It was a cry which Turkey suppressed in Bulgaria with the ferocity that she displayed in the Armenian massacres. From that era the Balkan Question became one of the skeletons in the cupboard of European politics. By virtue of that Slavic admixture which is to be found in each of the Balkan peoples, Russia, the chief of the Slav peoples, became their protector. To her several of them were indebted for the liberation from the tyranny of Turkish rule, and for the opportunity of crystallizing their nationalities into the form of nations or countries.

Greece stands outside this generalization. Of all the Christian populations in the Balkan peninsula the Greeks are the most numerous. They played a great part in the old Turkish Empire: for besides peopling Greece and the islands with a hardy and primitive population they were scattered through all the towns and became merchants and administrators, sheltered, though despised, by the Turk. They were the first among the Christian races to secure the independence of a portion of their nation. They owed it more particularly to the indomitable perseverance of the primitive peasantry and islanders; but since those heroic days the urban and educated Greek has played the most important part in Grecian affairs. Something has been due to Great Britain's benevolent

interest in Greece. The Greek uprising liberated from Turkey only the Peloponnesus, a few of the Ægean Islands, and the mainland south of Thessaly; and thus the kingdom of Greece was established. Great Britain handed over the Ionian Islands to her in 1863 after the accession of King George, and in 1881 Greece succeeded in obtaining from the Berlin Conference the whole of Thessaly and a small portion of Epirus. There was in Britain in the 'seventies and 'eighties a strong Philhellene party which had as its most conspicuous protagonist Mr. Gladstone, but which included less idealistic statesmen such as Sir Charles Dilke, who saw in the creation of a strong and greater Greece a pledge for our own safety in the Eastern Mediterranean. If the views of Mr. Gladstone and this party could have been given effect, Greece would have had a much larger share of territory than was actually allotted to her; but some of the blame must be borne by Greece herself, who was too timid at that time to help herself to the larger share of Epirus which Mr. Gladstone would have been glad to see her take. The succeeding Government of Lord Salisbury was not Philhellenic, and Lord Salisbury, as he himself afterwards admitted, was inclined at this juncture to back the wrong horse. By that he meant that Britain had elected to stand by the Sick Man of Europe, as Turkey was called, and to keep him in possession of as much territory in Europe as could still remain unalienated.

After the formation of the kingdom of Greece a considerable Greek popu-



lation remained subject to the Turk. They were to be found particularly in Salonica, Constantinople, and all the coast towns round the Ægean Sea; and in Crete, where they preserved the vigour with the primitiveness of the heroic days, they steadily destroyed or pushed out the Turkish minority. Crete has become identified in its later history with the name of M. Venizelos, a Cretan who retained his Greek nationality, and whose ambition it was to reunite Crete to Greece. He figured in the small Cretan revolution of 1889, and in the larger one of 1896. It was largely the question of Crete which brought about the struggle between Greece and Turkey in 1897 which ended so disastrously for the Greeks, but which, by the intervention of the Powers after the war, left Venizelos as President of the Assembly in an autonomous Crete. In all these vicissitudes of her modern history Greece has owed a great deal to the benevolence of the Western Powers, which desired to preserve her people and her civilization as much for the sake of the great tradition of her name as for any selfish interests of their own.

North of Greece in the Balkan Peninsula, which was once wholly Turkish, lies Macedonia, the theatre of rival claims of the Balkan nationalities, and Thrace. North of the Macedonian plain are the other partners to the Balkan problem, united once against Turkey, but of almost irreconcilable ambitions. Albania, a no man's land, holds the coast-line of the Adriatic and has two ports, Durazzo and Valona, or Avlona, quite early in the war occupied by Italy, the neigh-

bour on the other side of the Adriatic. North of Albania is Montenegro, with one poor port, Antivari, and eagerly striving to obtain Scutari on the lake. Montenegro is of all the Balkan States the poorest and the least sophisticated.

The three greater Balkan States, neighbours to Greece since the Balkan war with Turkey, are Bulgaria, with a port on the Ægean at Dedeagatch as well as on the Black Sea at Varna; Roumania, with a Black Sea port at Constanza; and Serbia, without an outlet on any sea. The Serbs are the most decisively Slav of all the Balkan people. They have had a chequered history, with a brief period of glory in the fourteenth century not long before their conquest by the Turks. For centuries after that they were restive under Turkish rule, but rarely successful. The first step towards their independence was made in 1812 with Russian help, and one of the clauses of the Treaty of Adrianople between Russia and Turkey in 1829 secured for Serbia all the privileges conferred on her under former treaties. A year later Milosh Obrenovitch was established, with the Sultan's formal recognition, as tributary Prince, with hereditary succession; and from these beginnings, with several vicissitudes and more than one tragedy, Serbia grew into a country with the ambition to become a Greater Serbia which should include all the people of the Serbian race, including those in Bosnia, the Slovenes and the Croats, who dwelt to the north and north-west of Serbia and Bosnia. Towards that ideal state the Serbians have made little progress since 1868, when Milosh's son

and successor Michael, who had paved the way to a better understanding with Turkey, was assassinated: but in spite of their tempestuous annals they were consolidating their strength and improving their position till the time when the formation of the Balkan League in 1912 gave them their opportunity.

East of Serbia, south of the Danube, is Bulgaria. The Bulgars, anthropologically related to the Finns, entered Europe with that race in one of the Hun invasions, and are possibly of Caucasian origin. They were not Slavs, though as conquerors they intermarried with them, and to the present day are generally spoken of as Slavs. At different epochs during the Middle Ages the Bulgarians were the prevailing power in the Balkans, and even at times the successful antagonists of Constantinople. After the Turkish conquest they suffered an extraordinary eclipse. From a military point of view they were entirely under Turkish control, and in civil and religious matters in the subject peninsula were subordinate to Greek influence. Slowly, however, the Bulgarian nationality reasserted itself, especially after the Crimean War. By 1870 the Bulgarians had secured ecclesiastical self-government; and the struggle for freedom received the support of General Ignatieff, the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. Five years later they rebelled, largely in response to Russian propaganda, against the Turks: and this rebellion was put down in a fashion which made the "Bulgarian Atrocities" a byword in Europe, though recent events have shown that the Turks have no monopoly in atrocities.

The Bulgarian revolt was followed by a Russian war in 1877-8, and the victory of Russia led to the formation of the Bulgarian State. It consisted of the district between the Danube and the Balkans, with a semi-attached province south of the Balkans, a province which was definitely united to Bulgaria a few years later. The new Bulgaria was nominally under Turkish suzerainty, and remained so till 1908; but it never ceased to aim at extending itself to the Ægean, and to include those districts in Macedonia where "Bulgarian" villages existed, though they might be mixed up with a Greek or Turkish population. The history of Bulgaria since then has been not less stormy. It was under the influence of Russia, to whom it owed everything, but it was never reconciled to its tutelage. The first Bulgarian prince, Alexander of Battenberg, was kidnapped, and Stambuloff, the strong minister who governed the country with ruthless courage till he could put another prince, Ferdinand of Coburg, in his place, and keep him there, was murdered. Ferdinand of Coburg, to all appearance a friend of Russia, and leaning on the diplomatic support of Russia while it was useful to consolidate his position and strengthen Bulgaria's hands, succeeded in giving Bulgaria the commanding position in the Balkans, and the preponderant influence in any scheme requiring common action between the Balkan States.

Roumania occupies a position distinct from that of the other Balkan nations. It is called Roumania from the language spoken there, which is derived, as Italian is, from the Latin

of the Roman Empire; and it has accordingly sentimental ties with Italy, so that when Italy entered the Great War it was popularly expected that Roumania would follow her. But the position of Roumania, which geographically is the most northerly of the Balkan States, is politically, historically, and ethnologically peculiar. Its people

were never for long under direct Turkish rule, but normally were left to direct their own affairs. But they suffered in most of the wars between Russia and Turkey, which began with Peter the Great, and continued intermittently during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. At the beginning of the nineteenth century Russia



After the Rains: Serbian Infantry holding their Trenches during the Floods

were formerly known as Vlachs or Wallachs, and the country consisted of two principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, currently spoken of as the "Danubian Principalities". As the region which they occupy lay right in the path of the ancient invasions of Goths, Huns, and Slavs, and of other races who poured into the Roman Empire, it is extremely unlikely that the Roumanians represent the old inhabitants of the Roman province.

During the period of Turkish supremacy the Danubian principalities

exercised certain rights of suzerainty over them, and after 1859 the two principalities were united under their modern name of Roumania. In 1866 they elected as their ruler, Prince Charles, the second son of Prince Charles Antony of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, an officer in the Prussian army, and related to the royal House of Prussia. Three years later he married Princess Elizabeth of Wied, better known as Carmen Sylva; and in the same year the army was re-organized, a police created, a form of



labour conscription introduced, and a railway concession granted to two German contractors. In brief, the Prussianization of Roumania was begun. For ten years the country passed through many domestic crises, in which the genius of John Bratiano pulled a not very popular sovereign through; but the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-8 threw politics into the melting-pot. Russia endeavoured to persuade Roumania to join her, or to permit the passage of Russian army corps through Roumanian territory. Bratiano temporized for some time, and entered into secret negotiations with Constantinople. But in the end Roumania allowed free passage to the Russian armies; and in the subsequent campaign Prince Charles and the Roumanian army contributed greatly to the success of the Russian arms. As the reward of their help they obtained complete independence of Turkey and the cession of the delta of the Danube and the Dobrudja as far as Constanza. But for the Dobrudja she had to pay the price of Bessarabia, given back to Russia, and the retrocession was most reluctantly made; and relations with Russia remained strained in consequence. Italy was the first of the Powers to recognize Roumanian independence; the other Powers followed after a rather grudging delay. In 1881 Prince Charles took the title of King; and for a number of years the history of Roumania, largely under the guidance of the elder Bratiano, was one in accordance with the pacific nature of her necessities and wishes. John Bratiano died in 1891; his son now

wears a portion of his mantle. The geographical position of Roumania makes it the least quarrelsome in intention of any of the Balkan States, since any disturbance which affects the interests of Russia threatens Roumania with pressure, because the Dobrudja is the shortest cut into the conflict by Russian armies. But Roumania has her national ambitions and her ideal of a Greater Roumania which should include the Roumanians who live in Transylvania over the Carpathians, as well as those in the Banat and in Bukowina. There are also little settlements of Vlachs scattered about the hills of the Balkan Peninsula, and there is always retroceded Bessarabia.

There remains yet another Balkan race—the Albanians, the least civilized, the most primitive of all. They are almost certainly the descendants of the tribes who occupied the barren hills of the country in Roman times, and their hands are turned against every man. Before the Great War a disastrous attempt to impose a ruler on them was made, but a very short experience convinced William of Wied that Albania was no place for a German prince, and the new dynasty collapsed as soon as it was set up. In the course of this war they have successively attacked the Montenegrins at the little estuary of San Giovanni di Medua, where efforts were being made to convey food to beleaguered Montenegro, and the Serbians in the course of the Serbian retreat to Scutari and to the Albanian ports. The Albanians were never conquered by the Turks, and if they



became Moslems, as most of them did, it was out of love of fighting, so as to take a hand in early Turkish campaigns in central Europe. Besides the Mohammedan Albanians in the middle region, there are Catholic Albanians in the north, close to Montenegro, and Greek Albanians in the south.

Italy and Montenegro both have

ments were the invasion of Herzegovina in 1876, in which Prince Nicholas of Montenegro joined Prince Milan of Serbia. In the resulting struggle with Turkey Montenegro captured Antivari and Dulcigno. But though after the war between Russia and Turkey, Russia strove by the Treaty of San Stefano to enlarge the



Austrian Interests on the Adriatic Coast: the land-locked harbour of Cattaro viewed from Mount Lovchen

interests in the Balkans, and Montenegro is spoken of as a Balkan State and the Montenegrins as related to the Serbs. But the Montenegrins, a people of great simplicity of life, regard themselves as a race older in distinction and aristocracy. Their history as an independent state began in the fourteenth century with the battle of Kossovo; and every century since it has fought with the Turks or with the Albanians. In the nineteenth century their most memorable achieve-

ment was the invasion of Herzegovina in 1876, in which Prince Nicholas of Montenegro joined Prince Milan of Serbia. In the resulting struggle with Turkey Montenegro captured Antivari and Dulcigno. But though after the war between Russia and Turkey, Russia strove by the Treaty of San Stefano to enlarge the boundaries of Montenegro so as to bring her into touch with Serbia, the Treaty of Berlin nullified these proposals, and the accession of territory to Montenegro was small. She obtained a seaboard, but it has no first-class port, and no practicable one except Antivari. The question of ports on this side of the Adriatic is one of vital interest to Italy. The course of the naval war between Italy and Austria in 1915 revealed the comparative vulnerability of the Italian

naval bases, and the almost perfect impregnability of the Austrian naval base at Pola, or that which could be established in the land-locked harbour of Cattaro. Italy's interest in the Balkan States, and the questions arising from their confederation, conquest, or alliances, are closely bound up with the ports on the western coast of the Balkan Peninsula. Any Power strongly established there imposes a new burden on her guardianship of the Adriatic, which is to her what the North Sea is to Great Britain. Italy revealed her precautionary sense of what was needful to her in any future settlement by occupying Valona (Avlona) even before she entered into the war as a combatant.

Over these several nations and diverse interests the Turkish hold throughout the last third of the nineteenth century continued to relax, loosened now by a revolt, now by a Treaty following on some larger war in which one of the Balkan States played a subsidiary part and was rewarded in a greater or smaller measure. But there was not during that time any attempt on the part of the Balkan States to complete their enfranchisement by combining against the oppressor. A British statesman once compared them to a party of three cats and a dog, and observed that there was as little likelihood of union between them. He was probably thinking of the attack on the Bulgarians by the Serbians in 1885-6, when Bulgaria occupied Eastern Roumelia. The battle of Slivnitsa, in which the Serbians were beaten, gave a keener edge to the antipathy of

Serb to Bulgar. Greece has always had a bone to pick with Bulgaria over Macedonia, which the Bulgars were endeavouring to colonize and Bulgarize at the same time; and Roumania's efforts in Macedonia to claim or reclaim districts on the strength of scattered communities of Roumanian-Vlachs were looked upon with no friendlier eye. Moreover, Greece's failure against the Turks in 1897 had inclined the other Balkan nations to regard her military pretensions slightly.

In the face of these suspicions and antipathies, it seemed that nothing but a miracle could ever have brought the Balkan States into a confederation. The miracle which did bring it about was the unlikely one of the fall of Abdul Hamid in 1908, and the rise of the Young Turk party of Reform and Progress. This revolution, apparently so damaging to Balkan ambitions, was doubly the reason for Balkan unity. The government of Macedonia and Thrace under Abdul Hamid had been corrupt but lenient. Under the Young Turks it was systematically corrupt and oppressive; and with the fear of the old Sultan removed from the minds of Turkish officials, there was much less security for life and property. As a result the whole of Macedonia was ripe for rebellion against the Turks—the first reason. The second reason was that the few statesmen whom the Balkan States possessed saw that this was their chance. It might be the last.

The greatest of these statesmen was M. Venizelos of Greece, if we exclude from consideration the subtle and

treacherous Tsar Ferdinand of Bulgaria,<sup>1</sup> who in respect of the formation of the Balkan League acted through his Prime Minister, M. Gueshoff. M. Gueshoff claims that he initiated and conducted the negotiations that led to the formation of the Balkan League; and though the idea of such a confederation had long ago been formed by a Greek statesman, Tricoupis, and destroyed by a Bulgarian, Stambuloff, it is possible that M. Gueshoff, in removing the chief obstacle to the confederation, which was Bulgaria's objection to it, justified his claim. A nucleus for the Balkan alliance existed in a secret agreement (1904) between Serbia and Bulgaria; and in 1911 new negotiations were opened between the two Powers for an offensive and defensive alliance. This was the year of the war between Italy and Turkey, and the time was no doubt thought ripe for pressure on Turkey, or against her. In May, 1911, the question of an understanding between Bulgaria and Greece had been raised; and after the treaty with Serbia had been signed on March 14, 1912, a treaty with Greece was signed on May 29, 1912. In both these treaties the question of the future government (or partition) of a Macedonia wrested from Turkish rule came under consideration. The evident difficulties in apportioning the claims of Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria in Macedonia were smoothed over—for the time. No written treaty was made between Bulgaria and Montenegro, though Serbia had made the

participation of Montenegro a condition, and had asked that in any question arising out of partition Russia should act as arbitrator. According to M. Gueshoff, Bulgaria sent M. Daneff to Petrograd to confer with the Emperor of Russia and M. Sazonoff in May, 1912, and told him that Bulgaria was "only waiting for the opportunity to cast the die".

It was quite evident at this point that the war between Turkey and the Balkan allies would be a difficult thing to stop; and it does not seem that either Russia or Austria wished to stop it. Germany was strangely non-committal. By September (the Balkan League having steadily forwarded its preparations) the relations between the adversaries had become so strained that the Powers made a show of intervention, and urged that autonomy should be granted to Macedonia, under the suzerainty of the Sultan. Turkey made a rather futile alternative offer which the Balkan States had no intention of considering seriously. While the Powers were still making representations to Turkey for the introduction of reforms on the lines laid down by the Balkan States, Montenegro forestalled any issue of the negotiations by declaring war on Turkey. It is asserted by the other Balkan States that she did so on her own responsibility. But Turkey, as anxious to fight as any other combatant, realizing that—to revert to M. Gueshoff's phrase—the die was cast, declared war against Bulgaria and Serbia. Greece, loyal to her allies, refused a bargain with Turkey, and declared war against her.

<sup>1</sup> Ferdinand had taken the opportunity afforded by the affairs of 1908 to have himself proclaimed Tsar of Bulgaria.









The Balkan-Turkish War, full of sudden and decisive episodes though it was, is of less importance historically than the events which followed it. The compact, modern army of Bulgaria, bursting through Macedonia, drove the Turks before it, winning victories at Lule Burgas and Kirk Kilisse in Thrace, and halting only before the defensive lines of Tchataldja. The Greek army, less vigorously opposed by the Turks, who had counted on being able to fight delaying actions against them, won a number of small actions in Macedonia, and, co-operating with the Serbians, did effectively all that was required of them. The Serbians joined the Bulgarians in the siege of Adrianople, and the combined forces took the town. Montenegro was still hammering at Scutari when an armistice was proclaimed. In all these scattered and unrelated operations it is not possible in a few sentences—or in a great many pages—so to pick a way as to be able to apportion the military achievements of the Balkan allies; and it is harder because there is no impartial account of the campaign. The Bulgarians claim that they were the hammer-head of the attack, and that it was their forces which disposed of the flower of the Turkish armies. The Serbians claim that Adrianople could not have been taken without their aid in men and guns, and that with the Greeks they dispersed the Turkish Monastir Army Corps. The Greeks claim that with the Serbians they overwhelmed as large a force as the Bulgarians had to meet in Thrace; and that but for the efforts of the Greek navy in prevent-

ing fresh Turkish troops from being landed at Dedeagatch, to fall on the right flank of the Bulgarian armies south of Adrianople, the Bulgarians would have suffered disaster.

The spirit of these contentions was reflected in the negotiations which followed the war, when, under the auspices of the Powers, the Balkan allies met in London to discuss the partition of Macedonia, which their armies had overrun. The London Peace Conference failed, in spite of the most strenuous efforts on the part of Sir Edward Grey to reconcile the conflicting territorial adjustments of the rivals. Serbia and Greece laid the blame on Dr. Daneff, the Bulgarian delegate; Gueshoff and Daneff blamed M. Venizelos of Greece and M. Pashitch of Serbia, and allege that Russia was the first to condemn Serbia's exorbitant claims. Gueshoff adds that they delayed signing the Treaty of Peace with Turkey in order to weaken and exhaust the waiting Bulgarian army. The subsequent conduct of Bulgaria at that juncture, no less than during the greater war which overtook Europe, affords the best commentary on her contentions. On June 29, 1913, under orders formulated by General Savoff, she attacked her allies Serbia and Greece. She has made efforts since to repudiate the responsibility for this senseless crime; but the evidence is against her, and so was the turn of events. The Serbian and Greek forces counter-attacked successfully; and no Bulgarian assertion that they were preparing an attack beforehand will rid Bulgaria of the shame of having struck the first blow. She had

to pay dearly for her action. Roumania, mobilizing, threatened her; and an ignominious withdrawal was Bulgaria's only resource. By the subsequent Treaty of Bucharest she lost not only what she had intended to seize, but

what she had bargained for. The territorial adjustments of the Treaty of Bucharest remained a standing bar against Bulgaria's participation in any Balkan alliance.

E. S. G.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE BALKANS AND THE GREAT WAR

(August, 1914—October, 1915)

Attitude of the Entente Powers to the Balkan States—Serbia and the Compact with Greece—Venizelos and Greater Greece—Venizelos and Gallipoli—Influence of King Constantine—Venizelos's Career—Germany and Greece—The Greek Head-quarters Staff and the Dardanelles—Entente Diplomacy and Force—The Gounaris Ministry—Greek Clamour for the Recall of Venizelos—Bulgaria and Ferdinand of Coburg—The "Chameleon's" Religious Convictions—Ferdinand's Successful Duping of Russia and Britain—Bargain with Turkey over the Enos Dedeagatch Railway—Greece and the Greco-Serbian Treaty—Bulgaria's Territorial Demands of Serbia and Greece as a Price for Neutrality—The Waiting Attitude of Roumania—Mobilization of the Bulgarian Armies, &c.—Greece's Counter-mobilization—Sir E. Grey's Warning to Bulgaria and Pledge to Serbia—Russia breaks off Relations with Bulgaria—Franco-British Landing at Salonika—Greece repudiates the Treaty with Serbia—The Skoloudis Ministry—Greece's "Benevolent Neutrality"—War Strength of the Balkan States.

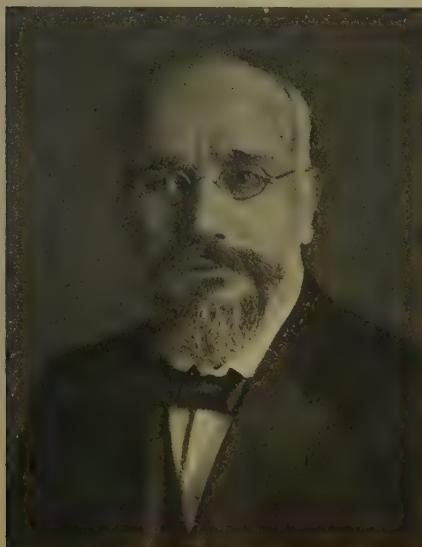
IF it had been feasible to keep the Balkan States out of the Great War, that limitation of the frontiers of warfare would best have served the interests of Russia, France, and Britain; because, although the aid of this or that Balkan State might facilitate their task in finding a weak spot in the defensive lines of the Central Powers, the conflicting interests of Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece made it unlikely that they would range themselves on the same side. A common enemy to be defeated had once bound them, with many reservations, in an alliance, but even during the war with Turkey the reservations had continually cropped up; and hardly had the enemy been beaten before they were at one another's throats again, dis-

playing the rancour of dogs, which, animated by mutual animosity at the best of times, fight more fiercely than ever when there is a bone to be fought for. The peculiar difficulty of the Entente Powers in dealing with these States was that before any settlement could be arrived at the question of the bone would again come up; and it would become necessary to take fragments of it out of one dog's mouth to give to another. Easy enough to talk in times of peace of adjustments and of apportioning disputed territory on the basis of a recognition of the national principle; but when the disputing States have their knives in their mouths and their hands full of pistols they will not listen to abstract justice. Added to that, abstract justice



was very hard to administer in the Balkan Peninsula, because its administration must be influenced by the bargains and agreements already made.

Serbia was a difficulty. It was impossible after all that Serbia had suffered, sacrificed, and done that her claims could be subjected to abatement. She had not been given, after



M. Venizelos

(From a photograph by Elliott & Fry)

the Second Balkan War, the outlet in the Adriatic which she coveted, because the Great Powers would not consent to any appropriation of Albania. It would seem an excess of ingratitude to ask her, the ally of the Entente, to sacrifice territory she had won, in order to appease Bulgaria, whose intentions were unknown. Greece, in a less decisive way, put the diplomatists of the Entente in a similar quandary. Greece had a defensive alliance with Serbia, the fruit of the

Second Balkan War, and directed against aggression on the part of Bulgaria. By virtue of this alliance, or as a corollary to it, she was to allow supplies and munitions to pass to Serbia through Greek territory. Such supplies and munitions passed actually through Salonika in the first year of the war; and this munitionment was one of the causes which contributed to the Serbian recovery at the end of 1914. On this account alone Greece's attitude towards the Entente Powers was to be described as benevolent. At one time it promised to be something more decisive than that. Among Greek public men the Entente Powers had one friend who was the strongest character in Greece, the Prime Minister, Eleutherios Venizelos, or Venizelos as the Greeks spell his name. It was Venizelos who perceived that in the victory of these Powers lay the one hope that the ambition of Greece to play a great part in the Mediterranean could be realized, because if Greece could give them assistance at a crucial moment, the seaboard which she had won after the Balkan wars would be assured to her in perpetuity, and would be expanded towards those Asiatic coasts which are already so largely colonized by Greeks. Through Venizelos Greece offered assistance at a moment when her help was very much wanted. The moment was when Great Britain and France meditated a spring on the Dardanelles. Venizelos offered a Greek division, presumed to be about 15,000 men, to help in a combined sea and land attack on the Gallipoli Peninsula. It was announced some months afterwards,

though not officially, that this offer had been withdrawn at the instance of King Constantine of Greece and the Greek Head-quarters Staff. The outward manifestation of a disagreement between King Constantine and M. Venizelos was the Prime Minister's resignation.

This was a step only extreme strength or extreme weakness could have led King Constantine to take. Venizelos has been to the present generation of Greeks what Cavour was to Italy, or Bismarck to Germany. He was only fifty years of age when the war began, but he had compressed a great deal of experience within them. He was a lawyer and a politician in the twenties; and a leader of the Cretan revolution when he was thirty-two. There is an odd recollection of him, that when the Admiral of the British Squadron off Crete invited some of the Cretan fighters to dine on his flagship, Venizelos created a sensation by appearing with the others, not in *vracas* and top-boots, but in evening dress. He also knew English. He became President of the Cretan Assembly in 1897; and fought Prince George of Greece in a constitutional manner for seven years. Finally he raised a revolt against him. Prince George went; Venizelos remained. But if he fought the royal family on a question of constitutional procedure in Crete, he stood as their champion when Greece was itself threatened with revolution. He consolidated Greece; he placed the royal family more firmly on the throne; he revised the criminal law and saw it administered; and it was he who at the proper

moment cemented the Balkan League—and saw that Greece gained more from it than any other member of it.



Constantine I, King of the Hellenes  
(From a photograph by Boucas)

When a man of this record and of a suavity, subtlety, and determination of character unmatched by any other statesman in the Near East declared for one course of conduct, what were

the hidden influences at work which steeled King Constantine of Greece to resist him? King Constantine is better known as a soldier than as a diplomatist; and he is a good soldier. He learnt his business in Germany, and it was perhaps on that account that he was given the supreme command of the Greek army in the disastrous war against Turkey in 1897. No Greek general emerged from that war with credit, and in the bloodless army revolution of the military league under Zorbas four years ago he was obliged to resign his command. Venizelos reinstated him, and showed a judgment which the Crown Prince vindicated in the Balkan War by his completely successful conduct of operations in Macedonia. It was while the war was still going on that his father, King George, was assassinated, and Constantine became king. It is a fact to be noted as not without significance that on the day of his proclamation as king he was less cheered by the populace than M. Venizelos. He is married to a princess of the Hohenzollerns and the sister of the Kaiser; and it was freely said that it was this alliance which determined his resistance to the policy of his Prime Minister. Another reason, not sufficiently considered, was that the Head-quarters Staff of the Greek army did not favour intervention on the side of the Entente.

That reason influenced King Constantine more than any other. A king, in spite of his matrimonial alliances, must think of his country first, or he will have no country to think about; and that truth was little likely to be ignored by the king of a nation

which had never shown an overpowering affection for his dynasty. Rumours found their way into the news from time to time of devastating threats uttered by the Kaiser as to the fate of Greece if she went over to the enemy, and these rumours may be true. But King Constantine would have been patriot enough to ignore them unless he had feared the Kaiser's ability to carry them into effect; and, if his course of conduct is carefully examined, it will be seen that he did ignore them whenever he believed that he was receiving sufficient backing from the Entente to enable him to do so without danger. It is possible to reverse this view of the case, and to say that he ceased to thwart the plans of the Entente whenever they showed that interference with the plans of the Entente would be resisted by force, and that the force was at hand for the purpose. But such an argument is no more than an admission that at several crises in the Near East the Entente Powers were not present in sufficient force. That is the exact truth.

They were not in sufficient force when the first attack on Gallipoli was projected. The Greek Head-quarters Staff warned them that the difficulties of forcing the Dardanelles were being underrated; and King Constantine, himself a soldier, and more profoundly influenced by military decisions than by political considerations, sided with them. He refused to hazard a Greek force against the Turks till he was satisfied that the Allies understood the job in hand and recognized how many men would be wanted for it. There seems no doubt of his prudence—now.

It is possible that a blow swiftly struck, with a Greek division as a nucleus, early in 1915 might have done what not all the heroism of the Australian, New Zealand, and British divisions could do later in the year. But a Greek division is not equal in numbers to the dead whom we left lying in Gallipoli; the Greek army would have been wiped out had it undertaken the task as we did. So that on the score of military expediency King Constantine was justified. If M. Venizelos had resigned solely on the refusal of the king to redeem the offer which had been made of Greek help for the Dardanelles Expedition, a sympathizer with the Entente might have said he was right, but could not have said that the king was wrong.

M. Venizelos continued to press the king to throw in his lot with the Entente when the possibility of sending military help had gone by, and subsequently published the letter in which he gave the reasons for his policy. These reasons were based on the belief that victory would ultimately rest with the Allied Powers, and that, though he recognized all the risks which Greece would run by resorting to arms, it was only by taking them that her larger ambitions could be realized. The king did not accept his arguments, and in the end Venizelos resigned, and a ministry was formed under M. Gounaris, whose feelings towards the Entente might be defined in the words of Pope as "willing to wound and yet afraid to strike".







It was evident, however, that the Greeks as a people were still under the influence of the known opinions of

Venizelos; and it was evident that at some time or other he would be recalled to office—as he was. Negotiations between the Entente Powers and Greece, therefore, still went on, though they now took a new form. British and French forces established themselves on the Gallipoli Peninsula. In Great Britain at any rate it was believed that the capture of the Dardanelles positions by these forces was only a question of time—and of men and of munitions. But the help of Greece, which might threaten the Turkish flank, would certainly hasten operations, and was worth paying for. The Greek people, influenced, as is not unlikely, by the early successes of the Gallipoli landing and the repulse of Turkish counter-attacks, began to clamour for the return of Venizelos. The feeling arose that if the Entente conquered Gallipoli without Greek aid, then Greece would have overstayed her market, and would receive nothing. The Greek elections re-established Venizelos, and presumably his policy. But he was much more cautious than heretofore in proclaiming it. A long illness of King Constantine delayed discussion, and one may presume that Venizelos hoped not to alarm the king into a second refusal. But now another factor came into prominence—it had always been present—what was Bulgaria going to do?

Bulgaria had always been, to outward appearance, balanced on the fence. She had proclaimed her neutrality; but it was a neutrality as benevolent to the Central Powers as that of Greece to the Entente. That is to say, she





-  Area wanted by Italy:~ Ports in Albania, and in Dalmatia as well as Istria and Trentino (Austrian) and Islands in the Aegean Kos, Rhodes, Scarpanto (The Dodecanessus occupied by Italy)
-  Area wanted by Serbia:~ Northern Albania near Scutari to have a Port
-  Area wanted by Bulgaria:~ Monastir district (Serbian) and Kavala district (Greek)
-  Area wanted by Roumania:~ Transylvania, the Banat and Bukovina
-  Area wanted by Greece:~ Southern Albania (Epirus) and the Islands on the Asiatic-Turkish coast
-  Area wanted by Montenegro:~ Scutari

had allowed supplies of munitions, petrol, and cement to go through her territory to Turkey, and almost without concealment was holding out one hand to the Turk and the other hand to the German, either for the help that Bulgaria could give, or for the payment Bulgaria would take. The prime mover in this blatant bargaining was the Tsar Ferdinand, who was the Dictator of the country, though the reluctance of the Bulgarians to follow his dictation was grossly exaggerated, or blindly believed in, by British optimists. One of the most pungent cartoons of M. Louis Raemakers, the Dutch artist, represents Ferdinand of Bulgaria as "The Chameleon", a man with a fat, smiling face and eyes of invincible cunning. But M. Raemakers explained to a writer the inner meaning of the title "The Chameleon". Ferdinand of Coburg was originally a Roman Catholic. When he desired the help of Russia his children were baptized into the Orthodox Greek Church. Early in 1915 he reverted to the Roman Catholic Church. The inference to anyone who could perceive it was irresistible. It was that Ferdinand was preparing to be received into the bosom of Austria, the most representative of Roman Catholic countries. Nevertheless, for six months he dangled before the eyes of the diplomatists of the Entente the prospect that his services were on sale to them—saying so through the mouth of his Prime Minister, Radoslavoff.

The remarkable thing about his attitude is not that he should have maintained it, but that the diplomatists of the Entente should have believed

in it. Great Britain might plead some excuse for being deceived up to a point—up to the breaking-point, in fact—and she was deceived; but how was it that Russia was gulled? The explanation may be that Russia never believed that Bulgaria would dare to throw the gage of battle into her face. Bulgaria did dare; and it does not appear that she proceeded with secrecy, unless secrecy be taken to mean saying one thing and doing another. She protested her neutrality while making arrangements with Turkey to take over the Enos-Dedeagatch railway; she went on protesting it while accepting a loan from Germany; and continued to protest it while German Staff Officers were in Sofia planning the joint campaign against Serbia with Generals Savoff and Fitcheff. Meanwhile the British newspapers, lulled into serenity by the warning not to interfere with "delicate negotiations", printed unconsciously deceptive accounts of heated interviews between Ferdinand and Agrarian and Radical deputies who did not want Bulgaria to go to war. It is evident to-day that Bulgaria deceived the Entente because the Entente deceived itself.

The one influence which might have kept Bulgaria out of the war would have been active action on the part of Greece. Greece was pledged to an alliance with Serbia. Surely, reasoned the Entente diplomatists, Bulgaria will not attack Serbia when a hostile Greece will menace her flank. Taking the declared Greco-Bulgar hostility for granted, the Entente diplomatists therefore put a Bulgarian attack on Serbia out of the question—or rele-

gated it to the position of a secondary consideration—and negotiated with Bulgaria with a view to securing her absolute neutrality, if not her actual co-operation with the Allies. This was certainly “delicate negotiation”—for Bulgaria wanted something that Greece had secured, and something that had been ceded to Serbia, and

the port of Kavala or Kavalla, which was of a great deal more value from a maritime standpoint than the ports which she possessed.

While Great Britain, France, and Russia were trying to persuade Serbia and Greece that the surrender of these territories, or part of them, would be all for their good, and that in the



Mobilizing the Rival Armies: Bulgaria's Levies lined up for inspection

the Entente had to persuade our actual ally or our potential one to render this territory, or part of it, to her.

From Serbia she wanted a wedge of territory west of the Vardar, which includes Monastir and is contiguous to the Serbo-Greek frontier, as well as another region joining this and running east of the Vardar to the Bulgarian frontier.

From Greece she wanted a wedge of territory running from the Bulgarian frontier to the Ægean, and including

settlement to come ample compensation would be paid for them, Bulgaria was busy securing the concession, already mentioned, of the strip of railway which joins Adrianople to the Ægean at Dedeagatch. No reasonable person could doubt that in exchange for this Bulgaria was making some sort of agreement with Turkey. Greece certainly could not doubt it; Serbia, who on August 24, 1915, had held a secret meeting of the Skuptchina and had sorrowfully recognized “sacri-

fices indispensable for the protection and vital interests of our people", could hardly think otherwise than that her allies had deluded her as well as deluded themselves. What Roumania thought we are hardly in a position to declare, except by inference. Roumania remained, in many respects, a more unknown quantity in the calculations of either camp of diplomatists than any other Balkan State. It was known that she had a modern, well-equipped, and efficiently-officered army, which formed a stronger weapon than that of the others, though a less tried one. But Roumania, while having as many "wants" as Bulgaria, included among them being Transylvania in Hungary, and a possible extension to the Banat on the Serbian frontier, as well as the Bukovina, was a vulnerable country. She could less easily attack Austria than Austria could attack her. Her past experiences warned her that the nearest Russian way to attack Bulgaria or Turkey lay through her territory; and that any cession of her neutrality in the direction of permitting this would invite an immediate attack by the Central Powers. She could not risk this unless she were assured that the forces of the Entente could protect her; and that had yet to be proved. So Roumania, like Greece, waited on events.

It is not for us to blame them. Their armies were small compared with the great forces engaged; they both knew a great deal about German "frightfulness", and even at that moment the Turks, under the spur of the Germans, were committing atrocities

on the Armenians with a view to showing the Greeks who inhabit the coast towns of Turkey-in-Asia what they would have to expect. Roumania and Greece had a great deal to lose; they were very uncertain what they would gain; and with a prudence which small speculators do not always show, they refused to gamble with the Greater Powers.

Bulgaria, however, was now in the game. Having been a loser on the previous occasion, when she had gambled with her armies and her allies, she had the more to gain now, and could depend on being well paid for services already rendered to the Central Powers, as well as those to come. At the worst, and even accepting the prognostications of the Entente publicists, she would be a well-protected State under the hegemony of the Central Powers. It is probable that Tsar Ferdinand counted on his own astuteness to rescue him from any too great subordination to German or Austrian power when the settlement came. If, as he may have expected, the settlement proved an inconclusive one, it would be hard to turn him out of his possessions; and he perhaps had some subtlety up his sleeve for the event of a victory for the Entente. Whatever his expectations, he determined to take the risks, and in September, 1915, he acknowledged that Bulgaria had come to an agreement with Turkey by which Bulgaria should in future maintain an armed neutrality.

This announcement was immediately followed by the mobilization of the Bulgarian army. Greece re-



sponded with a counter mobilization-order on September 24, and this was hailed as a decisive intimation that if Bulgaria stepped into the fray on behalf of the Central Powers, Greece was prepared to join the Entente, or at any rate to redeem the pledge of her defensive alliance with Serbia against a Bulgarian attack. The situation was grave. Sir Edward Grey, on September 28, in a brief statement on the attitude of the British Government, spoke of the traditionally warm feeling in Britain towards Bulgaria, and declared that—

“So long as the Bulgarian attitude is unaggressive there should be no disturbance of friendly relations. If, on the other hand, the Bulgarian mobilization were to result in Bulgaria assuming an aggressive attitude on behalf of our enemies, we are prepared to give to our friends in the Balkans all the support in our power in the manner that would be most welcome to them, in concert with our Allies, without reserve and without qualification.”

The situation was even graver than these words. Bulgaria had certainly at that time made up her mind; the plans for joint military action between her and the Austro-German armies were already typed; and had the threat of British support to Serbia been less empty than it was, Bulgaria had gone much too far to secede. She had no wish to secede. There was well-assured confidence on the part of General Fitcheff, as on that of Field-Marshal Mackensen, that long before a British or a Franco-British force could act effectively, the doorway of Serbia would be broken open and the Serbian armies in retreat.

Sir Edward Grey, as he afterwards explained (November 10, 1915), had meant no more than that all promises and concessions to Bulgaria were at an end, and that our troops would “be employed solely to help our friends”; but promise and threat were alike unavailing in the absence of sufficient force on the spot. On October 3 Russia broke off relations with Bulgaria, so long her protégé, withdrawing her Minister from Sofia and gravely admonishing the ungrateful land; but this rupture left Bulgaria as unmoved as any other warning addressed to her. The only thing that would have interrupted her indifference would have been the mobilization of Roumania, which did not take place, or the fulfilment by Greece of her treaty obligations to Serbia, which she may have had reason to believe would be withheld.

At any rate, that intervention was withheld. France and Great Britain negotiated with M. Venizelos for permission to land British and French troops at Salonika to co-operate with Serbia, and with Greece if Greece were willing. M. Venizelos’s action was confirmed by the Greek Chamber on October 4; and on October 5 the landing at Salonika began, the French moving rapidly up to the Serbo-Bulgarian frontier, and the British temporarily encamping on the territory allotted to Serbia for military purposes in her convention with Greece. On the same day, however, King Constantine informed M. Venizelos that he “could not pursue M. Venizelos’s policy to the end”. In other words, he was not willing to allow Greece to

come in on behalf of Serbia—or therefore on the side of the Allies. There may be some excuses for King Constantine's action, but the chief of them was prudence. M. Venizelos again resigned, and M. Zaimis formed a stop-gap ministry, which, on October 12, announced its intention, while remaining benevolent towards the Allies and towards Serbia, of repudiating any obligation under its treaty to Serbia of fighting side by side with her. The ground of the repudiation was that this was not a war with Bulgaria, but part of the European War, in which by entry Greece would be committed to hostilities against Germany and Austria. This attitude was maintained through another stop-gap ministry under M. Skoloudis, after that of M. Zaimis had fallen in consequence of a vote of no confidence moved by M. Venizelos. King Constantine and the Greek military party were not to be moved from their attitude of non-intervention. Time will show whether their decision was based on military grounds alone. It can be said, at any rate, that at this moment in 1915 (September–October) the Germans and Austrians were prepared and free to fling large bodies of men into Serbia; and the forces landed by France and by Great Britain were not large enough to assure Greece of complete exemption from disaster. Other disclosures which followed of the state of feeling manifested towards the Entente forces at Salonika made it

doubtful whether the “benevolent neutrality” proclaimed by Greece was as benevolent as it pretended to be.

During this period of indecision in Greece the pressure in Serbia was being exerted in a fashion which was characteristic of the Germans in conducting a winning campaign against inferior forces. The Austro-German forces made an attack, on October 6, on a number of crossings of the Save and the Danube. On October 9 Belgrade was once again occupied, and the next day the heights outside it were seized. The object of beginning the attack in this northern river frontier of Serbia was to hold the Serbians to it, and prevent them from adopting the strategy, which would have suited their numerically inferior forces far better, of retreating quickly to the southern half of the kingdom and fighting their decisive battles there. The Serbians fought heroically, but, as will be seen in a later chapter, they were forced back by successive envelopments on the west, mile after mile, and had no opportunity of ever disengaging themselves. While they were thus being held on the front, Bulgaria was massing for an attack on the eastern flank. The first blow was struck by them on October 11, when they crossed the frontier east and south-east of Nish in the Morava valley. They declared war formally on October 14, three days later.

E. S. G.

## WAR STRENGTH OF THE BALKAN STATES

The precise numbers which the Balkan States could put into the field was known only to the Head-quarters Staff of the armies, and was jealously guarded by them. But an approximation of the numbers may be obtained from a consideration of the peace strength of the armies, and may be roughly stated as follows:—

### ROUMANIA

#### *Peace Strength—*

Infantry.	Officers.	Horses.	Guns.
124,389	5749	25,585	808

#### *War Strength—*

600,000 men (approximately).

Roumania's army consisted of 5 Army Corps, 2 Cavalry Divisions:

An Army Corps is equivalent to 2 divisions with a reserve division and a cavalry brigade.

A Division is equivalent to 2 brigades with an artillery brigade.

A Brigade is equivalent to 2 regiments of 3 battalions with a battalion of chasseurs.

This may be summed up as follows: the Roumanian army had 40 infantry regiments, 9 rifle regiments, 20 cavalry regiments, 20 regiments of field-artillery, 5 howitzer divisions, 3 heavy artillery batteries, 7 engineer battalions.

### BULGARIA

#### *Peace Strength—*

Infantry.	Officers.
56,000	3900

#### *War Strength—*

400,000 men (approximately).

Field army, 280,000 men, with lines of communication troops.

Bulgaria's army consisted of 9 Divisions:

Infantry—36 regiments of 2 battalions, expanding to 4 battalions.

Artillery—9 regiments of six 4-gun batteries, expanding to nine batteries, 3 battalions of fortress artillery.

### SERBIA

It is futile to conjecture the strength of the Serbian army, but before the last two campaigns which it had endured it was estimated at 361,000 of all ranks.

In war the field army consisted of:—

- 5 regular divisions.
- 1 cavalry division, each of 4 regiments and 2 horse batteries.
- 1 regiment mountain artillery.
- 1 regiment howitzers.

The total of these divisions was 175,000 men, with 95,000 first reservists.

### GREECE

#### *Peace Strength—*

28,000 men. 2000 officers.

*War Strength*, estimated 200,000 men.

The Greek army nominally consisted of 4 divisions, which could be at once brought up to about 15,000 men, but 4 extra divisions could be found which would bring the field army up to about 120,000 men. There were in addition independent battalions of "Evzani", numbering about 1600 men apiece, a Cretan regiment, and irregulars. These, with line-of-communication troops and volunteers, brought the numbers up to over 200,000 men. The artillery was armed with Creusot 3-inch guns, the mountain artillery in Schneider-Canet.

### GREEK NAVY

Armoured battleships:—

<i>Averoff</i> (modern, 1910), ...	10,118 tons.
<i>Psara</i> ... ..	} 5,000 "
<i>Hydra</i> ... ..	
<i>Spetrai</i> ... ..	

Destroyers ...	14
Torpedo boats ...	5
Submarine ...	1

Four or five auxiliary cruisers, several small gunboats, and a number of armed corvettes.

## CHAPTER IX

## THE AUTUMN OFFENSIVE OF 1915—FIRST PHASE

(September 25, 1915)

Preparing for the Great Offensive in the West—Exaggerated Hopes—The Net Result—Joffre's Plan of Attack—Sir John French's Share—The Secondary Operations—Plumer's Feint Attack East of Ypres—Heroism of the Light Division of the New Army—Captain Carmichael's Death—A "Die-Hard's" V.C.—The Dashing Attack below Bois Grenier—How a Gurkha Won the Victoria Cross—Black Watch, Leicesters, and Indians at Pietre Mill—Manchester Pluck near Neuve Chapelle—Demonstrations near Festubert and Givenchy—Stoic Courage of a Welsh Fusilier—The Main Attack South of La Bassée—Its General Plan—Guarding the Secret—An Unprecedented Bombardment—British Gas and Smoke Screens—The Battlefield at Dawn on September 25—Postponement of the French Attack—Its Influence on the British Operations—London Territorial Division again Proves its Mettle—The London Irish and their Football—Honours for the Terriers—Their War Trophies in Field Guns—Helping to Clear up Loos—Glorious Exploits of the 15th (Scottish) Division—How Piper Laidlaw Won his V.C.—The Heroine of Loos—War Trophies of the 15th Division—The Scottish Advance to the Outskirts of Lens—Holding on to Hill 70—The 1st Division's Advance on Hulluch held up—Removing the German Wedge—Victoria Cross Heroes of Hulluch—7th Division's Capture of the Quarries—Gallant Gordons at Haisnes—With the Scotsmen of "K.I."—"The Battle of the Slag-heaps"—The Hohenzollern Redoubt—First Phase of the Fight for its Possession—The Left Wing's Sanguinary Repulse—End of the First Day's Battle.

WITH the fall of the autumn leaves along the Western front fell the blow for which friend and foe alike had been preparing all through the summer months of 1915. The gradual accumulation of a smashing force of artillery along the whole line, and the arrival of one after another division of the New Army had filled the veterans at the front with the hope that the day of glory was at hand when the entire face of the struggle in the West would be changed, and the outlook brightened throughout the world-wide war. The optimists at home were buoyed by the same sanguine hopes. They could almost hear the distant rumble of the Allies' guns as they read in the *communiqués* from Head-quarters for weeks before the great offensive little but reports of increasing artillery activity on both sides. Vice-Admiral Bacon's intermittent

bombardment of the Belgian coast-line, designed to keep the enemy on tenter-hooks regarding the possible landing of a British army from Dover, could indeed be distinctly heard at times from the nearer shores of Kent. Every portent pointed to the approach of the crushing blow in the West that had seemed doubly imperative since the fall of Warsaw early in August, and the failure during the same month of our grand attack in Gallipoli. With these disasters, and the gathering clouds in the Balkans, the march of events had moved none too favourably for the Allies on land since the Second Battle of Ypres. Our own strength and capacity in men and munitions, in spite of all our efforts, were as yet only half-developed. They could not be fully exerted in the firing-line before at least the spring of 1916. At sea we still asserted our proud supremacy, thanks



to our magnificent navy, which alone, at long last, could give us the victory. But it was on land that our greatest efforts were now expected in order to shorten the war. Every Briton knew that we were preparing a mighty scourge for the Kaiser's army, and that the first lash was about to be delivered. So that when the Government announced one day in September that it had temporarily prohibited all ordinary telegraphic and postal communication with the rest of the world, everyone knew that the lashing had begun.

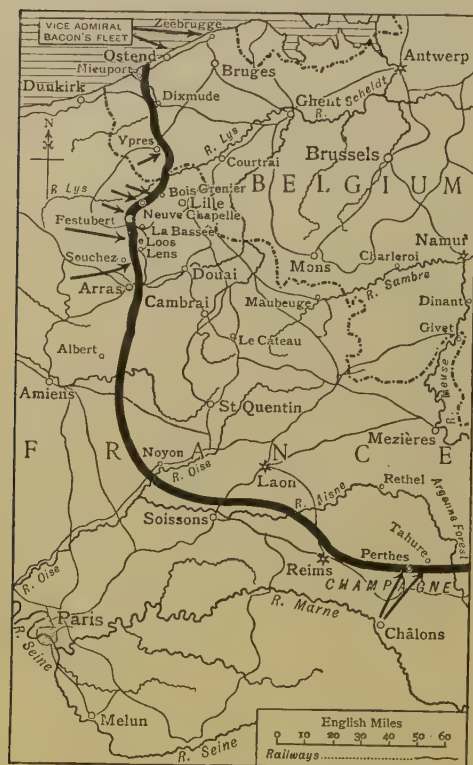
The pity of it was that hope so long deferred had raised impossible dreams—dreams of breaking through the German lines so thoroughly in one fell swoop that, side by side with France, we should win a vital victory which would transform the whole aspect of the war. Had we dreamt instead that the Allies between them would account for between 150,000 to 300,000 Germans—French and British official and expert estimates varying between these two extremes<sup>1</sup>—and capture 150 guns, we should probably have been well content with the result. As it was, we staked too heavily on the larger hope, and were disappointed. We were not alone in thus counting on decisive results, as General Joffre issued a secret order on September 15 to the Generals commanding divisions in his army—an order intercepted by the enemy, according to the German Wireless Press, which subsequently issued what purported to be a complete translation—

explaining the plan of attack "to drive the Germans out of France", so that "not only will we liberate those of our countrymen who have been suppressed for the last twelve months, but we will also snatch away from the enemy the valuable possession of the occupied territory". This crowning triumph was not achieved, but enough was accomplished to shatter the arrogant boast of the foe that his "wall of steel" along the Western front could nowhere be broken, and to strengthen the Allies' confident belief that his final overthrow was merely a question of time.

General Joffre's plan of attack appears to have been elaborated in August, but was not ripe for execution until towards the end of September. Had it been carried out in the earlier month, before the fall of the great Russian fortresses, one after the other, had released a large proportion of the heavy German guns for the expected attack on the Western front, the result might have been different. In August, however, the enemy was already forewarned of the impending onslaught, a secret order captured on one of the German officer prisoners, signed by General von Dittfurth, showing that though the Germans did not then know exactly in what sector it would begin, they were fully alive to its imminence, and taking due precautions to place all their lines in a thorough state of defence. General von Dittfurth's order was dated August 15, 1915. Perhaps General Joffre had purposely given the enemy an early hint of the great offensive in order to relieve as quickly as possible the alarming pressure on the Russian front.

<sup>1</sup> Germany at the time issued a statement, for the benefit of neutrals and home consumption, vaguely placing her losses, at the most, at 50,000, but her official casualty lists, in due course, furnished evidence in support of estimates much nearer 300,000 than 50,000.

In any case it was imperative to keep the enemy in ignorance, up to the very last moment, as to the precise point at which the blow would fall. This meant an entirely different problem in modern warfare—with its battle-



Key Map to Major and Minor Operations in the Allied Offensive of September, 1915

fronts stretching for hundreds of miles on end, and its vigilant, unfailing eyes overhead—from the comparatively simple strategy of the past. General Joffre's plan—and it is well to remember that the British army, even though it now numbered nearly a million men, was still under the supreme command of the French general-

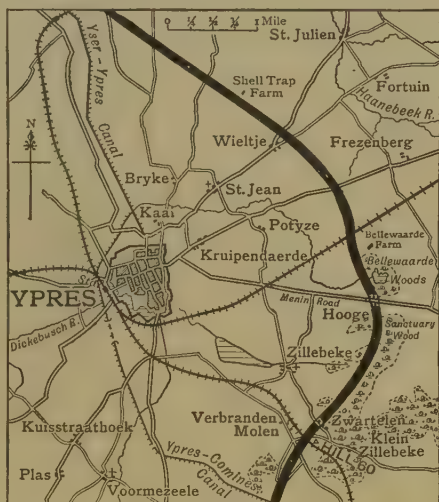
issimo, just as the French army at Cape Helles had been subordinate to Sir Ian Hamilton in Gallipoli—was to threaten as many points as possible, right from the North Sea to the Swiss frontier, reserving his real thrusts for Champagne and Artois. In Champagne General de Castelnau, Joffre's right-hand man, was to capture the railway behind the enemy's lines, which formed the main supply for his troops, force him back on the Aisne, and, if possible, cut off the army of the German Crown Prince threatening Verdun. In Artois the objective was still the Arras-Lens-La Bassée road, which, with the railway that had proved so valuable to the Germans in any concentration of their troops to meet a sudden emergency, had been so stubbornly fought for and defended for over a year. This time it was hoped to break clean through the enemy's lines, and clear a path for the cavalry to complete a crushing victory. Here the Allied armies had their new junction, Sir John French, as already explained, having taken over additional sectors of General Joffre's trenches, carrying his line roughly from the village of Boesinghe, north of Ypres, to the region of Grenay, some 4 miles west of Lens. His chief share in the combined offensive was to push through between Lens and La Bassée on the north, while Generals Foch and d'Urbal carried the Vimy heights and attacked Lens from the south.

Before approaching this joint attack, remembered by the British as the Battle of Loos, we must first glance at the secondary operations, designed to distract the enemy's attention and

keep him off the main scent. As in Sir Ian Hamilton's first attacks in the Gallipoli adventure of August 6, the navy was made to play its share in these diversions, Vice-Admiral Bacon's fleet, with its formidable assortment of seventy to eighty vessels, to which reference has already been made, rendering valuable assistance by threatening a landing off Zeebrugge and Ostend. Five hundred odd miles away, at the other end of the Allies' line, where the French troops had forced an opening through the Vosges into Alsace, a suspicious mustering of reinforcements at this point warned the enemy to be on his guard against an overwhelming inrush in a supreme effort to recover the lost provinces for France. Feint attacks were made at Ypres and other points along the British front, as well as by King Albert's army, and the French troops under General Hely d'Oissel which still held the trenches between the Belgians on the Yser and Bixschoote—all on September 25, the day of the Great Push, accompanied by the thunder of the Allies' guns along the whole line.

Here, for the moment, we are only concerned with the feint attacks on the British front, beginning east of Ypres with Sir Herbert Plumer's assault with the 5th Corps—part of the Second Army—on the Bellewaarde Ridge, north of the Menin road and the scene of so many sanguinary conflicts at Hooze. Here the Duke of Württemberg's army was still smarting under its defeat of August 9, when the trenches lost by us in the flaming-gas attack of the previous month had been recovered with interest, and held

ever since. The 3rd Division now made its feint attack at Hooze, south of the Menin road, while the 14th, the Light Division of the New Army, which had suffered such cruel losses in the first *flammenwerfer* surprise in July, stormed the Bellewaarde Farm and Ridge to the north. The fighting in each case served its main purpose



Map showing approximately the Allies' Line round Ypres and the scene of the operations north and south of Hooze on September 25, 1915

of holding the enemy to that particular front, and even drawing up some of his reserves; but it was, inevitably, costly. The enemy was fully prepared, the furious bombardment which prepared the way for Sir Herbert Plumer's infantry at daybreak on September 25 removing any lingering doubts on the subject. The explosion of a mine north of the Bellewaarde Farm towards 4.30 a.m. was the signal to the New Army troops of the 14th Division to advance, and almost before the smoke had cleared away from the smouldering crater they



were in possession of the greater part of the enemy's front line, the 5th Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry in the centre, with the 9th Rifle Brigade on their left and the 5th Shropshire Light Infantry on their right. Battalions of the King's Royal Rifles and Somerset Light Infantry were held in reserve. Then, however, came the inevitable cannonade from every available gun in the district. "Owing to the powerful fire concentrated against them", reported Sir John French in his dispatch, "the troops were unable to retain the ground, and had to return to their original trenches." This brief summary hides a tale of heroic sacrifice, in which privates and "non-coms." of the New Army stepped nobly into the breach when all their officers had fallen. The 5th Oxford and Bucks, advancing in two columns, lost heavily in the charge. The right column succeeded in carrying the German positions in fine style, putting one mitrailleuse out of action and destroying another; but the left column fell under a storm of shell-fire which practically destroyed it. It was at this critical juncture that Private H. A. Duester, one of but ten survivors, showed what the rank and file of the Light Division of the New Army could do when put to the test after losing their officers.

"With great bravery", records the *Gazette*, "he led this party into the German lines, and successfully bombed his way to the second line, showing great determination and power of leadership. When the line fell back his party was nearly cut off, but by judicious bombing, and the use of German bombs, he successfully extricated them. He was recommended for reward [receiving the D.C.M.] by his surviving comrades."

The 9th Rifle Brigade on the left at first swept all before it in a glorious charge which carried four lines of trenches in succession, thanks in no small measure to the noble example of Captain Douglas Carmichael, whose phenomenal coolness and inspiring personality had singled him out in the liquid-fire attack in July, when his battalion had been badly knocked, and made his name famous throughout the division. "I have no words to express his magnificent bravery," wrote one of his superior officers after the action of September 25, when, in the words of a sergeant of the same battalion, he earned the V.C. fifty times over. He was only twenty-one, graduating at Jesus College, Cambridge but three months before the outbreak of war, when he immediately applied for a commission.

"It is quite impossible", added the officer referred to, in a letter quoted by the *Daily Chronicle*, "that anyone so fearless could ever be found. He carried four lines of trenches with his company under a most desperate artillery and machine-gun fire, and when masses of Germans came against him, by his wonderful personality he kept his men, now reduced to a handful, in good spirit, and led them again and again to the attack. They say it was glorious to see him throw himself on the packed masses of Germans, and, almost alone, force them back. He rallied the men over and over again, and they stuck to him to the end. He was wounded early in the day, about 5 a.m., but, just like him, made nothing of it. He was killed instantaneously by a bullet in the forehead as he was once more leading a bomb charge.

"I can never look on his like again."

The non-commissioned officers and



men of the 9th Rifle Brigade carried on with a courage worthy of such leadership. Sergeant H. J. Willey, of another company, when all his officers had been killed, rallied his men and led them in a successful attack on the enemy's second-line trench, a section of which he held in spite of all attempts to wrest it from him. He also took six prisoners, and made them carry back the wounded of his party. Five other prisoners were captured by Private H. Hill, who, single-handed, held a German trench for over one and a half hours against constant bomb attacks, to which he replied by hurling bombs from a German store, as well as by rifle-fire. Like Sergeant Willey, he was rewarded with the D.C.M., also won by Private C. G. Roberts, of the same battalion, who held a barricade for over two and a half hours against incessant counter-attacks, after all his comrades had been killed, remaining at his post with dogged determination until finally ordered away.

On the right the 5th Shropshire Light Infantry had forced their way into the German lines south of the Bellewaarde Farm with conspicuous gallantry under a murderous outburst of machine-gun fire. Here, as elsewhere, however, it became a hopeless fight against overwhelming odds. After the retirement had taken place under a storm of German shells, Private A. Corney ventured through the fire-swept zone for over 100 yards and brought in a machine-gun which had been abandoned. He, too, received the D.C.M.

In the meanwhile the 3rd Division

at Hooge, south of the Menin Road, was attacking with equal courage and devotion. Among the battalions bearing the brunt of the fighting at this point were the 1st Gordon Highlanders and the 4th Middlesex, who, with the Royal Engineers, had shared the honour of winning back the Hooge position on July 19; the 7th Border Regiment, the 1st Royal Scots Fusiliers, and the 2nd South Lancashire Regiment. The advance had to be made over open ground swept by machine-gun and rifle fire, and under heavy shell bombardment. Second-Lieutenant Alfred W. Gates, attached to the 2nd from the 3rd South Lancashires, won the Military Cross in the initial assault, when he advanced twice through this appalling fire with a party of bombers—on the second occasion reaching the enemy's unbroken wire entanglements, which he strove personally to cut through—but was compelled on each occasion to retire owing to casualties. Some of the German trenches were carried, and held against terrific odds, but, the chief object of the attack having been achieved, most of the troops were withdrawn. Meantime the Germans rained shells on the captured positions and our own trenches with prodigal hate, and counter-attacked repeatedly. In the confused fighting of the next few days they even succeeded in penetrating our lines. On the 26th, Temporary Second-Lieutenant J. Christian White, of the 7th Border Regiment, earned the Military Cross for leading a bombing-party to assist another battalion which sorely needed their help. "The bombers", says the

*Gazette*, "were driven back through heavy casualties, but Second-Lieutenant White held on till only he and one bomber were left, when heavy shelling forced them to retire." The devoted bomber was Private R. Thompson, who well deserved the D.C.M. which subsequently fell to his share. The chief hero of this



Second-Lieutenant R. Price Hallows, 4th Battalion Middlesex Regiment, who won the V.C., and was mortally wounded, in the fighting at Hooze

renewed struggle at Hooze, however—a struggle which, like the inflammation from an old wound, took longer to subside than the other subsidiary operations on the Western front—was Temporary Second-Lieutenant Rupert Price Hallows, of the 4th Middlesex Regiment, the story of whose share in the fighting at Hooze between September 25 and October 1, 1915, is officially recorded as follows:—

"Second-Lieutenant Hallows displayed throughout these days the greatest bravery and untiring energy, and set a magnificent example to his men during four heavy and prolonged bombardments. On more than one occasion he climbed up on the parapet, utterly regardless of danger, in order to put fresh heart into his men. He made daring reconnaissances of the German positions in our lines. When the supply of bombs was running short he went back under very heavy shell-fire and brought up a fresh supply. Even after he was mortally wounded he continued to cheer those around him and to inspire them with fresh courage."

In winning the Victoria Cross at the cost of his life Second-Lieutenant Hallows had proved himself a true "Die Hard" to the last. The Honourable Artillery Company had its share of the battle for the salient of Sanctuary Wood, as of so much other fighting for the blood-stained soil of Hooze. It was in a fierce bomb fight at this point, on September 30, that one of its officers, Second-Lieutenant William F. Hammond, earned the Military Cross "for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty". Though severely wounded in the right side during the afternoon, and unable to use his right arm, Second-Lieutenant Hammond remained at the front, using his left arm, till after nightfall, when at length his wound compelled him to retire. Sergeant A. O. Pollard, also of the Honourable Artillery Company, won the D.C.M. at the same time for a similar display of bravery and devotion, recorded in the *Gazette* as follows:—

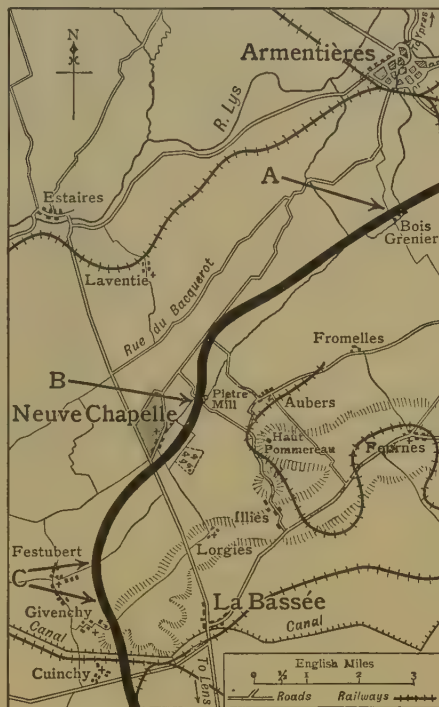
"Although severely wounded, Sergeant Pollard continued to throw bombs, at the same time issuing orders to and encourag-

ing his men. By his example and gallant conduct he renewed confidence among the bombers at a time when they were shaken, owing to the enemy being in superior numbers and throwing many more bombs than were available on our side. He did not give up until he fell severely wounded for the second time."

In the course of this prolonged struggle east of Ypres the 5th Corps, though forced back to its original positions, captured 2 officers and 138 other prisoners, besides holding the Duke of Württemberg's army to its ground while the main attack was proceeding elsewhere.

Similar demonstrations with the same object in view were made along the whole front of the Second Army, as well as by those units of the First Army occupying the line north of the Béthune-La Bassée Canal. While the enemy was distracted by the deafening bombardment at so many other points, a dashing attack was delivered from the British front below Bois Grenier, which lies just south of Armentières. Here the initial charge, with the Berkshires in the centre, and other battalions of the Rifle Brigade and Lincolns to right and left respectively, went perfectly, we are told by Reuter's correspondent, save at one point, where the oncoming troops were suddenly revealed in a chance flash from one of the enemy's search-lights. In an instant the German machine-guns rattled out a decimating fire, holding up the attack at this point, and leaving an ugly and dangerous wedge in the British line as it swept on victoriously to left and right. "All the regiments engaged played a gallant

part", wrote Reuter's correspondent. "The Rifle Brigade did magnificently." Having carried the first line, their strong force of bombers at once extended and captured the second line as well, while our guns "lifted" on to



Subsidiary Operations in the Great Offensive on September 25, 1915: the feint attacks between Armentières and La Bassée Canal

A, Attack of the Rifle Brigade, Lincolns, and Royal Berkshires. B, Attack of the Black Watch, 2nd Leicesters, and Meerut Battalions of Indian Corps. C, Minor operations of 1st Corps near Festubert and Giverny.

the enemy's third line. The wedge in the centre, unfortunately, proved a stumbling-block to effectual co-operation with the troops on the left, and as soon as the enemy had recovered from the first shock, and hurried up his reserves, he made the



most of this fatal advantage. By 10 a.m. the Germans' second line had become untenable, the Rifle Brigade being now back in the first line, where a counter-attack was repulsed with heavy loss. The Berkshires and Lincolns in the meanwhile were playing their unselfish part—sacrificing themselves that others might win—no less stubbornly. The Berkshires, in the centre, who stormed a strong redoubt familiarly called the "Lozenge"; and the Lincolns, on the left, who carried the stronghold known as Bridoux Fort and took eighty prisoners, held on like the Rifle Brigade until shortly after 3 p.m., when the order was given for the general retirement to our own lines, the main object of the attack having by this time been accomplished. There were some exhilarating moments in the course of the fight, although it was but a feint attack, with no prospect of a real advance. The story is told by Reuter of a company cook, a middle-aged man, whose place was not in the firing-line, but who became so excited by the din of battle that he could not restrain his ardour. Flinging his utensils aside, he dashed

off to the German trench and joined in the fray with the greatest gusto. Some ennobling acts of self-sacrifice are also recorded in the *Gazette*. While one of the batteries near Armentières was being heavily shelled,



During the Bombardment before the Attack: Instantaneous photograph of a shrapnel shell bursting near the Allies' trenches

Temporary-Lieutenant H. B. Walker, of the Royal Army Medical Corps, proceeded unhesitatingly to attend to the wounded at one of the guns. While doing this the next gun was put out of action and all the detachment killed, but, nothing daunted, Lieutenant Walker proceeded with his merciful work,



carrying on till the arrival of the field-ambulance. For his heroic devotion he received the Military Cross, which was also awarded to Second-Lieutenant J. H. Swan, of the 5th (Territorial) Northumberland Fusiliers, for rescuing a wounded sergeant that night while bombing the German trenches in the same region. Second-Lieutenant Swan remained with the sergeant, who was severely wounded, within a few yards of the German wire, and did his best to bandage him. Then, while the Germans continued to fire, he gradually dragged him back on a coat towards our own lines. Thus, with the aid of another officer and stretcher-bearers, who came out to assist, the wounded sergeant was at length brought in, though not before he had been wounded again.

More to the south the tide of battle again burst forth in these secondary attacks in the war-scarred sector of Neuve Chapelle, where British and Indian troops made another attempt against the sinister strongholds guarding the Aubers ridge at Pietre Mill. In the great attack which had won the village of Neuve Chapelle six months previously the 2nd Leicesters, whose courage and endurance were described by one of the generals as beyond all praise, had rendered invaluable help to one of the Indian battalions held up by the unbroken wire entanglements of the enemy. Now one of the Gurkhas — Rifleman Kulbir Thapa — helped to repay the debt by earning the Victoria Cross at the risk of his life in saving a badly wounded soldier of the 2nd Leicesters, who, with the 2nd Black Watch, were again sharing

the operations with their Indian comrades. Kulbir Thapa, who belonged to the 2nd Battalion Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles, was himself wounded when he came across the helpless Leicestershireman behind the first-line German trench. The British soldier urged him to save himself, but Kulbir Thapa insisted on remaining with him all day and throughout the ensuing night.

"In the early morning of September 26, in misty weather," adds the official record, "he brought him out through the German wire, and, leaving him in a place of comparative safety, returned and brought in two wounded Gurkhas one after the other. He then went back in broad daylight for the British soldier and brought him in also, carrying him most of the way and being at most points under the enemy's fire."

The attack had been made with the 2nd Black Watch in the centre, and the 2nd Leicesters and Indians on either flank. The Black Watch, though suffering in many cases from the effects of gas, dashed to the assault to the tune of "Hieland Laddie", accompanied by their regimental pipers, one of whom was killed and the other wounded. Led by Captain James I. Buchan, the advance company carried three lines of German trenches in succession, reaching the enemy's reserve line near the Moulin. Thence Lieutenant Buchan only gave the order to retire when the troops on both flanks — held up by unbroken wire and heavily counter-attacked — had been forced back and he himself had been wounded. For his splendid leadership he received the D.S.O., also awarded to Captain Maitland E. Park,

of the same battalion, for similar conduct when leading his company and directing bombing attacks in the continuous close fighting, which lasted from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m.

"During this time", says the *Gazette*, "he drove the enemy back some 400 yards along two lines of trenches and established three blocks, which he held until relieved." The 2nd Leicesters and Indians were forced back only after heroic efforts against hopeless odds. One of the Leicesters' officers, Captain W. C. Wilson, whose name had been brought forward several times before for exceptional bravery and determination, now won the D.S.O. at the very beginning of the attack, when he was severely wounded while giving final instructions to his men. "But he stuck to his work", adds the *Gazette*, "and went forward, encouraging his men till he could see through the smoke that they were over the German parapet. He was then helped back in an exhausted state." Major Frederick Lewis, another officer of the same battalion who had previously been brought to notice for gallant conduct, received the D.S.O. for similarly distinguishing himself while acting as second in command on this occasion:

"At an early stage he was wounded in the neck, but refused to leave his post for three hours, and then returned immediately after his wound was dressed. He set a fine example to those around him. About 3.30 p.m. he took command of his battalion, his senior officer being wounded."

When all his officers except one had been killed or wounded in this costly assault, Company Quarter-Master Ser-

geant W. Bale, of the same fine battalion, rallied the men with magnificent courage, reorganizing those who were still unwounded, and leading them again to the attack. "He exposed himself", states the *Gazette* in recording his award of the D.C.M., "with the utmost contempt for danger." Later, when uncut wire at length made further progress out of the question, he collected the few remaining survivors and got them under what cover was available. These German strongholds, formidable as they had proved in the battle of the previous May, were now six months stronger, and sheer death-traps for infantry without a smashing, preliminary torrent of high explosives. It was during the heavy fighting in this region that Lieutenant George Allan Maling, M.B., of the Royal Army Medical Corps, won his Victoria Cross, working incessantly from 6.15 a.m. on the 25th until 8 a.m. on the 26th, in the course of which he collected and treated in the open, under shell fire, more than 300 men. Once, at about 11 a.m. on the first day, he was flung down and temporarily stunned by the bursting of a large high-explosive shell, which wounded his only assistant and killed several of his patients. Then, shortly afterwards, came a second shell which covered him and his instruments with debris, "but his high courage and zeal", it is recorded, "never failed him, and he continued his gallant work single-handed".

The holding attacks in the grey light of dawn near Neuve Chapelle were marked by another thrilling incident which would have led to disaster but

for the daring and resource of Second-Lieutenant Leslie Findlater, attached to the 1st from the 3rd Battalion Manchester Regiment, courageously supported by Private E. J. Edwards, also of the 1st Manchesters. Believing the trenches opposite him to be occupied by our troops, that officer led his platoon up to the barbed wire, which he cut and

British front was concerned, with assaults by those units of the 1st Corps above the Béthune-La Bassée Canal near Festubert and Givenchy, as if to convince the enemy that we were repeating the tactics of May 9, when the First Army was launched along the whole front from Givenchy to Bois Grenier. The regiments in



Modern Warfare on the Western Front: British Machine-gun Section wearing anti-gas masks

passed through before being discovered by Germans, who were holding the trenches in force. Ordering his platoon to retire, Second-Lieutenant Findlater himself, with Private Edwards, stayed behind to cover the movement by throwing bombs into the German trench—with such good effect that the retirement was completed in good order and with little loss.

All these mystifying offensives at so many points along the whole Western line were completed, so far as the

this last feint attack, marching boldly to their fate at daybreak on September 25, had no more chance than the others against the defences of the enemy, still intact for the most part, and bristling with machine-guns. The 9th Welsh Regiment, 9th Royal Welsh Fusiliers, 9th Cheshires, and 6th Wilts all suffered heavily in this action. When the company of the 6th Wilts, to which he was attached with a party of grenadiers, lost all its officers, Temporary Second-Lieutenant K. W.



## The Great World War

Trueman took command, and, entrenching himself, maintained his hold until ordered to withdraw, when he skilfully brought back the company with comparatively few further casualties. His reward was the Military Cross, also conferred upon Temporary Second-Lieutenant S. S. John, of the 9th Cheshires, a battalion which earned

our trenches bearing him on his back, a distance of some 200 yards. The wounded man was hit a second time before finally reaching safety. When the retirement was ordered, Private W. Shaw bravely risked his life for the officer whose servant he was, first helping him back to safety behind our parapet, and then, hearing that the



Official Photograph

After the British Bombardment: Wrecked machine-gun emplacement in one of the captured German trenches

great honour that day for many outstanding acts of heroism. In the face of an appalling fire from shot and shell, Private G. Aitken reached the enemy's parapet alone, "and had returned for some distance", to quote from the *Gazette*, "when he heard calls from a wounded man who was near the point from which he had come". At once retracing his steps, Private Aitken found his wounded comrade, and then crawled back to

officer was wounded, venturing out again to his assistance in the face of an exceptionally accurate and heavy machine-gun and rifle fire, being himself wounded in so doing.<sup>1</sup> It was during this ordeal, after the retirement to the trenches, that Second-Lieutenant John won his Military Cross, crawling

<sup>1</sup> Both Privates Aitken and Shaw received the D.C.M., Private A. Calff, also of the 9th Cheshire, being awarded the same decoration for gallantry and initiative in saving the situation when one of the enemy's shells set fire to a large bomb-store in the crowded trenches.



out under fire and helping to bring in, in succession, the wounded officer and about twenty men of another battalion. Thus he saved many lives, continuing his gallant work throughout the day until he was utterly exhausted.

One almost incredible instance of stoic courage in this sector is also officially vouched for in the *Gazette*, where the story is briefly told how Lance-Sergeant J. Williams, of the 9th Royal Welsh Fusiliers, "though badly wounded himself—one hand was hanging by two threads only, and he was also wounded in the shoulder—assisted to bandage all the wounded near him". He refused to receive any assistance from the stretcher-bearer, and while helping in the work of bandaging found time to encourage and cheer on the rest of his company as they passed him. Finally, we are told, he walked down the communication-trench to the first-aid post without assistance. Surely no finer display of pluck and endurance was witnessed throughout all those scattered battlefields than the amazing performance of this Royal Welsh Fusilier. It was rewarded with the Distinguished Conduct Medal, also won near Festubert on the same occasion by two men of the 9th Welsh Regiment—Private R. J. Fawcett, who faced death more than once with messages across the fire-swept zone between our trenches and the German lines; and Corporal E. G. Sheldrake, who, though twice wounded in the initial attack, continued to advance, setting a noble example to his men both then and in the retirement, when he rendered great assistance in collecting and bringing

back the remainder of his company. Here, as elsewhere in these subsidiary demonstrations, all the troops, after hard fighting and variable fortunes, were back in their original lines by nightfall on the 25th, the enemy bringing up powerful reserves and rendering untenable the hard-won trenches. The attacks had succeeded admirably, however, as Sir John French bore witness, "in fulfilling the rôle allotted to them, and in holding large numbers of the enemy away from the main attack".

Festubert and the 1st Army Corps bring us at last to the Great Push itself. The hour, as General Joffre's intercepted Army Order explained to his generals, was propitious, "first because the landing of Kitchener's Army in France had been completed, and secondly, because, during the past month, the Germans have withdrawn from our front forces for use on the Russian front". Also, the batteries of heavy calibre, specially prepared with a view to an early attack, were now ready. Constant meetings had taken place between General Joffre and Sir John French, who acted throughout with the closest accord and co-operation, and after full discussion of the military situation the British Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief acquiesced in the decision arrived at for joint action. The general plan of the main attack on the British front, delivered by the First Army under Sir Douglas Haig, on September 25, was briefly stated by Sir John French as follows:—

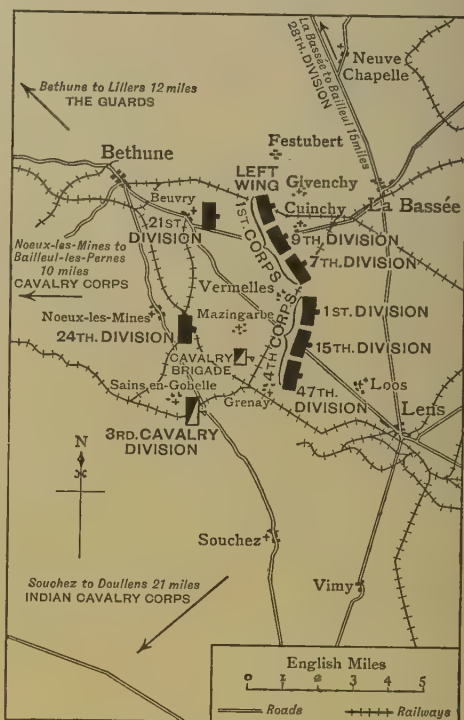
"In co-operation with an offensive movement by the 10th Army Corps on our right, the 1st and 4th Corps were to attack the

enemy from a point opposite the little mining village of Grenay on the south to the La Bassée Canal on the north. The Vermelles-Hulluch Road was to be the dividing-line between the two corps, the 4th Corps delivering the right attack and the 1st Corps the left."

The 4th Corps, under Sir Henry Rawlinson, with the 47th London Territorial Division on the right, the 15th (New Army) Division in the centre, and the 1st Division on the left, were to carry Loos and the heights between Lens and Hulluch. The 1st Corps, under Lieutenant-General Hubert Gough, with the immortal 7th Division on its right, the 9th (New Army) Division in the centre, and the left wing extended to the canal, was to link up with the 4th at Hulluch, sweeping the enemy from the Quarries, the Hohenzollern Redoubt and Fosse 8 at the same time threatening the La Bassée salient from the south. This, with the success of the 10th French army on the right of the 4th Corps, would make a mighty gap in the German line in Artois, while General de Castelnau was hammering away with a similar object in Champagne.

Infinite pains were taken to keep the enemy off the scent as the armies mustered for the long and eagerly anticipated combat. The reserves in particular—the Guards and the 21st and 24th Divisions, forming the 11th Corps—were stationed far enough from the battle-field to give the enemy little clue as to their real destination. The 21st and 24th Divisions were at no great distance, passing the night of the 24th–25th on the line Beuvry–

Nœux les Mines, south of Béthune, but the Guards Division on the same night was at Lillers, twelve miles north-west of Béthune. The 28th Division of the Second Army was also held in readiness at Bailleul—15 miles north of La Bassée—to meet any



The Battle Front of the British Troops before the great attack of September 25, 1915, and the positions of the Cavalry and Reserves

unexpected eventuality. The accompanying map shows how scattered were these gathering-points for the reserves, and in some cases how remote from the scene of action. The 21st and 24th Divisions filed past Sir John French at Béthune and Nœux les Mines between 11 a.m. and midday on the 25th, having been ordered up in sup-

port of the attacking troops, and the heads of both divisions were reported to have reached within 3 miles of our original trench lines by 11.30 a.m., but apparently they were not in action until after nightfall. The Guards arrived at Nœux les Mines at 6 p.m. on the 25th, and were placed at Sir Douglas Haig's disposal on the morning of the 26th, the 28th Division being given to this Commander on the same day.

The main attack on the 25th, therefore, was left to the 1st and 4th Army Corps, with the cavalry ready to co-operate in any decisive success which might be attained. Plans for effective co-operation had been fully arranged between the cavalry commanders of the combined French and British forces, all eager for the great opportunity which had been denied them so long. The British cavalry corps, less the 3rd Cavalry Division, under General Fanshawe, was posted in the neighbourhood of St. Pol and Bailleul les Pernes, the Indian Cavalry Corps, under General Michael F. Rimington, at Doullens; both in readiness to act with the French cavalry. The 3rd Cavalry Division, less one brigade, was assigned to Sir Douglas Haig as a reserve, and moved into the area of the 4th Corps on the 21st and 22nd September.

For a full month the French and British artillery, with many batteries of new type brought in play, and unlimited stores of shells, had been bombarding the elaborate defensive positions of the enemy from end to end of his Western front, culminating before the main positions in a con-

tinuous bombardment of unprecedented weight and fury. "Our splendidly constructed trenches", admitted the special war correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt* in his account of the battle of Loos, "were wrecked; our wire entanglements were blown to shreds. Everything on all sides—scrub, trees, grass—disappeared, leaving the earth furrowed and naked." The German batteries swelled the chorus, but their fire was less formidable. British guns seemed to be stationed everywhere, all pounding their hardest at carefully registered points of the enemy's trenches.

"There were guns all round us—rank upon rank," writes Ian Hay, in his vivid impression of the battle in *The First Hundred Thousand*, "to judge by the noise you would have said tier upon tier. Half a mile ahead, upon the face of a gentle slope, a sequence of flames would spout from the ground, and a storm of shells go whistling on their way. No sooner had this happened than there would come a shattering roar from the ground beneath our feet, and a heavy battery, concealed in a hedge fifty yards to our front, would launch its contribution. Farther back lay heavier batteries still, and beyond that batteries so powerful and so distant that one heard the shell pass before the report came."

If the enemy still cherished any false illusions as to our ability to build up an efficient artillery to provide for an army on a Continental scale, he had now good reason to number them with many other shattered dreams regarding Britain and her Empire. The bombardment came from the sky as well as from the artillery in the British lines. For days beforehand and during the battle aeroplanes alone and in



flocks had not only co-operated with the guns and carried out invaluable reconnaissance work, but had also attacked the railways and other vital points far behind the enemy's lines. During these operations the Royal Flying Corps in the space of five

Two other weapons of offence had been added to the Allies' armoury since the last joint offensive, and were now to be used by them for the first time—gas and smoke devices, for the adoption of which the Germans had but themselves to blame. The enemy



Drawn by A. Forestier

The Eve of the Battle of Loos: a Scottish "Listening Party" telephoning information back to the artillery

"Listening parties" were sent out on the night before the battle to note the damage done by the British guns to the German defence works. These parties usually consisted of an officer, a corporal with a telephone "buzzer", and a couple of bombers ready for emergencies. When they saw the enemy repairing a portion of a trench they would send word back to the artillery to repeat the dose on the same spot. In the background on the left is one of the great slag-heaps which played such a large part in the battle. To the right of this is the mining structure known to the troops as the "Tower Bridge" or "Crystal Palace". Beyond it, to the right, stand the little town of Loos and Hill 70.

days is officially credited with having dropped nearly six tons of explosives on moving trains alone. Five of these trains, some containing troops, are known to have been wrecked, while the main railway line, on which the enemy depended so largely for the movements of his troops and supplies, was damaged in many different places.

had been responsible for the introduction of poisonous gas, and to have allowed him the monopoly of its use would have placed the Allied troops under an infamous disadvantage, and been hailed by the foe as a triumph for German science. Unluckily, the wind, which had been as favourable as possible during the previous twenty-



four hours, and on which so much depended for the success of the British gas surprise, dropped and shifted slightly on the critical morning, with the result that the heavy vapours were less effective than had been hoped for, and drifting past some of the enemy's main positions, affected some of our own troops. The screen of smoke was an innovation that probably surprised the Germans more than the gas. The correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt* already referred to describes how, towards the end of the earth-shaking cannonade, whitish fog-banks began to creep slowly nearer and nearer from the British lines.

"The landscape"—to quote from Reuter's translation—"consists of flat meadows and fields, and in these months a mist hangs over it morning and evening. Thus it happened that our men at first thought the approaching whitish bank of vapour was mist, but very soon they knew what was the matter. It was a gas attack, and the order was issued: 'Put on the gas masks'. The bank of fog passed over our trenches; then came a low bank of smoke creeping towards us, black-grey; then, again, another bank of gas, some ten minutes behind the first. Altogether three or four double waves of whitish gas and smoke gas swept over our trenches. There was nothing else to be seen. Some men coughed and fell down. The others stood at the ready as long as possible. The British artillery at the same time fired gas shells on our trenches. Behind the fourth gas and smoke cloud there suddenly emerged Britons in thick lines and storming columns. They rose suddenly from the earth wearing smoke masks over their faces, and looking not like soldiers but like devils. The wire was no longer there to hold them back."

The signal to charge had been given

on that momentous Saturday morning precisely at half-past six, when the guns simultaneously ceased, preparatory to reopening at longer range while the infantry completed their work on the trenches in front. The sudden cessation in the deafening bombardment brought an overpowering sense of relief. For the first time for three days and three nights there was peace. Peace, at least, for the time being, for those in the reserve trenches. For those in the front trenches it meant the long-anticipated rush over the ramparts—those ramparts that had hitherto meant death to anyone venturing even to peer over their tops—and the swift charge across the open, the distance between the opposing lines varying from about 100 to 500 yards. The country was for the most part open and unattractive, overgrown with rank grass and self-sown crops; seamed with trenches, the chalky soil from which, thrown up as parapets and parados, streaked the land with lines of dirty white; and dotted with mining villages and the pits and slag-heaps of a typical colliery district. On the left, facing the First Army, the most conspicuous object was the mighty slag-heap known as Fosse 8, towering high above its coal-mine and the more intricate Hohenzollern Redoubt, which had thrust itself forward in the same region like a great promontory, "a maze of trenches, machine-gun emplacements, and barbed wire", writes Ian Hay, "all flush with or under the ground, and terribly difficult to cripple with shell-fire". Away to the south-east were the strongly fortified Quarries, the first goal of the 7th Division, rather

more than a mile above Hulluch—facing the 1st Division of the 4th Corps—a village strung out along a tiny stream, and lying 2 miles or so north-east of Loos, where the great gaunt structure known to the soldiers either as the “Crystal Palace” or the “Tower Bridge”, and long coveted by them, stood out against the sky as the most prominent landmark for miles round. The “Tower Bridge” formed part of the mining works outside Loos, and was constructed of double metal turrets connected by overhead girders, with a platform in the middle which the Germans had found invaluable for observation purposes. All the Tommies were convinced that it had been secretly built for the purpose before the war.

It was in this sector, on the right of the British front, that the first decisive rôle in the battle had to be played, since it was towards Loos and Lens that the joint efforts of the Allies in Artois were converging. Unfortunately, for some reason not officially explained, the 10th French Army on the right of our 4th Corps had to postpone its attack until one o'clock in the afternoon. It has been suggested that the French waited for a more favourable turn in the wind; but the more feasible explanation is that the Germans had secretly diverted the Carency streams and so created a swamp near Souchez—indistinguishable either from the French lines or from the air, but rendering impossible a rapid advance of troops—which at the last moment upset the vital scheme of co-operation.

Sir John French throws no light on the subject in his dispatch, merely ex-

plaining “that the Corps operating on the French left had to be directed in a more or less south-easterly direction, involving, in case of our success, a considerable gap in our line”. Obviously this danger was a heavy handicap to Sir John French. “It was necessary to keep a strong reserve in my own hand,” says the Field-Marshal. Every man would have been needed had the 47th London Territorial Division failed at this critical section on the right and let the enemy through. But the 47th had already proved its mettle at Givenchy and Festubert, and did not fail to form a strong defensive flank. Its success greatly relieved the Field-Marshal's apprehension on this score, and he expresses his appreciation in his dispatch in words of well-earned praise:

“The London Territorial Division acquitted itself most creditably. It was skilfully led, and the troops carried out their task with great energy and determination. They contributed very largely to our success in this part of the field.”

With the rest of the British troops in the attacking-line, they had leapt from their parapets behind the gas- and smoke-clouds at 6.30 a.m. and carried the first- and second-line trenches in swift succession. The gas here had not been so effective as it might have been, and a fair number of Germans—and, worse still, German machine-guns—were left in the shattered trenches to take heavy toll before they were killed or captured. In this grim work many men distinguished themselves. Private F. G. Challoner, of the 6th Battalion London Regiment, won the D.C.M. for bayoneting and shooting no fewer

than nine of the enemy in charging the first-line trenches. When all his company officers had been killed or wounded in this assault, Company Sergeant-Major Yelf of the same battalion, which advanced with the London Irish on its right and the 7th London Regiment on its left, led his men to the second-line trenches, which

of their lives, with the triumphant cry of "Goal!" Captain A. P. Hamilton, of the London Irish, was severely wounded early in the day, but he remained in the German second-line trench reorganizing the men till the consolidation was well advanced; and then had to be ordered back for medical attendance. His splendid



Drawn by S. Begg

"Not like soldiers but like devils": a German's description of the British Territorials of the 47th Division charging the enemy's trenches in their anti-gas masks in the Battle of Loos, September 25, 1915

he captured and consolidated, thereby also earning the D.C.M. The 18th Battalion (London Irish) carried all before them in a charge which Brigadier-General Thwaites is reported to have described as "one of the finest actions of the war". The story is also told of the London Irish that one set of their men—professional footballers—smuggled a football into their lines and dribbled it into the enemy's trenches in the greatest game

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devotion to duty was rewarded with the Military Cross, also won on the same day by Second-Lieutenant H. O. B. Roberts, of the 7th London Regiment, who was wounded in both legs while leading his men with great coolness and bravery against the German counter-attack; by Lieutenant A. S. Thomas, of the 8th London (Post Office Rifles), who saved the situation with his grenadiers when the enemy had successfully advanced

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against the flank of one of our battalions, bombing back and holding him at bay till a double block had been established; and by Lieutenant Edmond Ninus Carr, of the 24th London Regiment, for a cool and plucky act which prevented the explosion of thousands of grenades and bombs and saved many lives at the divisional bomb reserve. While directing the removal of grenades from the divisional dump, Lieutenant Carr noticed that the fuse of one of the bombs had become ignited. He at once picked it up and carried it out of the dug-out, but before he could get cover it exploded and wounded him in the face. His prompt courage undoubtedly averted a grave disaster.

Unfortunately it is impossible to mention even a tithe of the gallant deeds on this occasion standing to the immortal credit of the 47th Division. Such incidents as we select from the *Gazette*, where names and awards are given, are chosen only as throwing official light on operations concerning which so many confused accounts have been published. The 20th Battalion (Blackheath and Woolwich) earned the glory of capturing two of the twenty-one German guns, afterwards exhibited on the Horse Guards Parade as tangible fruits of the British advance. They were both 85-mm. field-guns. One of the 77-mm. field-guns included in the spoils was captured by another battalion of the London Regiment, the 19th (St. Pancras). To the credit of the 19th also stands one of the finest exploits of the day, in which Second-Lieutenant Frederick L. Pusch, while leading a party of St.

Pancras bombers during the advance through Loos, ventured alone into a house held by Germans, and single-handed captured seven of them, though badly shot in the face while doing so. "Notwithstanding his serious injury", says the *Gazette*, in recording his award of the D.S.O., "this very gallant officer continued clearing the enemy out of the cellars of the town;" and also greatly distinguished himself in the later operations.

Swinging their left forward in the initial advance, the "Terriers" had occupied the southern outskirts of Loos—a town of some 12,000 inhabitants—and, on the way, the two monster slag-heaps known as the Double Crassier. Still pushing on, they captured the cemetery and chalk-pits south of the town, thus forming a defensive flank, extending from Grenay to Loos, which they continued to hold until at length relieved by French troops five days later.

On the left of the Londoners the 15th Division, springing from their trenches at the same moment as the rest of the British line, in the misty dawn of the 25th, showed what the Scotsmen of the Second New Army could do when put to the test. The ardour of these impetuous troops, long pent up and now suddenly released, carried them through successive lines of German trenches, swept them through Loos itself—fighting from house to house and street to street, until no living German remained to rule the town with Teutonic ruthlessness—gave them in swift succession the formidable German strongholds at the coal-mine known as Pit 14 *bis* and





Drawn by Christopher Clark

How Piper Laidlaw won the Victoria Cross on September 25, 1915: Playing the 7th King's Own Scottish Borderers out of their trenches at the Battle of Loos in the midst of the gas attack

at Hill 70, and even carried them on as far as Cité St. Auguste, a mining village about a mile to the east of Hill 70, on the very outskirts of Lens. Thus, in a few brief but tremendous hours, three brigades of newly-trained and practically untried troops—roughly 12,000 officers and men—had made the most considerable British advance since the deadly war of trenches began, penetrating some  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles beyond the enemy's front line. It was magnificent, and will live among the glorious exploits of the British army, but, alas! its very vigour had carried the leading troops out of hand, carried them into the jaws of death. No converging movement from the south had yet begun on the French side; the London Territorials had too stern a task on the right flank adequately to support the impetuous advance beyond Loos; while on the other side the nearest brigade of the 1st Division was unable to make any headway towards Hulluch, with the result that the Scotsmen's left flank was dangerously exposed to a counter-attack throughout. Also the gas at the very beginning of the charge, blown back at certain points into our own trenches, had been more hindrance than help. It was at this critical moment that Piper Daniel Laidlaw, 7th King's Own Scottish Borderers, won the first Victoria Cross of the battle.

"During the worst of the bombardment," to quote from the *Gazette*, "when the attack was about to commence, Piper Laidlaw, seeing that his company was somewhat shaken from the effects of gas, with absolute coolness and disregard of danger, mounted the parapet, marched up and down, and played his company out of the trench. The

effect of his splendid example was immediate, and the company dashed out to the assault. Piper Laidlaw continued playing his pipes till he was wounded."

The gas, it seems, according to a published interview with the piper, had been dispersed among our own men by the bursting of German high-explosive shells in its midst. In a flash Lieutenant Young, noticing its effect on our men, exclaimed: "For God's sake, Laidlaw, pipe them together"; and this the gallant piper did at once in full view of the enemy. The spirit of the officers of the 15th Division was exemplified in the irrepressible ardour of Captain M. F. B. Dennis, of the same battalion, who was wounded in the trenches immediately before the assault, but, after the bandaging of his wound, advanced with his men, cheering and encouraging them till he was again wounded near Loos. He was carried back to the dressing station, but disappeared as soon as his wound was dressed, and later was seen catching up his company near Hill 70 and again cheering them on till he was wounded a third time. No D.S.O. was ever more valiantly earned.

Nothing could stop these Kitchener's Scotsmen in their first glorious charge. One brigade, carrying the first two lines with a rush, raced across the open to throw an enveloping net round the north of Loos, while another brigade stormed the Loos front, the reserve brigade following to share in the fierce fight for the town itself. The scene in Loos that Saturday morning beggars description. So swift had been the onrush that the German garrison,

sheltering in their cellars and dug-outs from the fury of the bombardment, and trusting too long to their strong defence-works, had little time to rally. With the Territorials advancing from the south, and the Scotsmen from the north and west, many of them were caught like rats in a trap. The more demoralized surrendered in bunches.



The Heroine of Loos: Mlle Moreau, who shot five German soldiers and so saved the lives of wounded British troops

Others put up a stiff rear-guard action, gradually retiring towards Lens, or selling their lives dearly behind shattered houses armed with machine-guns. The most pitiful sight of all was the desperate plight of the two or three hundred remaining inhabitants—women and children for the most part—who, though ready to welcome their rescuers with open arms, knew not where to turn for safety. Among the survivors was a worthy country-woman of Joan of Arc, Mlle Emilienne Moreau, the dauntless girl of eighteen

who will always be remembered as the heroine of Loos. With her own hand Mlle Moreau shot and killed five Germans who, while the fight was surging from street to street, and she was tending some of the wounded Britons, came up with the deliberate intention of attacking these helpless troops. "You do honour to the women of France", said General de Sailly a few weeks later, when he publicly decorated Mlle Moreau at Versailles with the Croix de Guerre.

The Londoners entered Loos from the south, after carrying the cemetery—a place of death indeed, horribly infested with German machine-guns among the tombs—and with the Scotsmen in possession from the west and north, the little town was soon in our complete possession. The 4th London Field Company, ordered up to the battered ruins of Loos church—close to the "Crystal Palace", which had fallen into our hands within the first hour of the advance—had a narrow escape from being blown to pieces. German shells were now raining on the ruins, under which the enemy, ready for all emergencies, had laid his mines. In the midst of the din of shrapnel and whistling high explosives Major E. B. Blogg, of this company, cut the fuse, thus preventing an appalling explosion. For this he was decorated with the D.S.O. Both Londoners and Scotsmen sent back streams of German prisoners, besides capturing many machine-guns and field-guns mounted in concrete redoubts. Altogether eight field-guns fell to the 15th Division in the course of the battle. One of the biggest



hauls of Huns fell to Second-Lieutenant J. Bruce Wood, of the 10th Gordon Highlanders, who captured with his men no fewer than 275 prisoners, and marched them back under heavy fire with a small escort, returning with fresh ammunition for the men in the firing line. Being by this time the only officer left in his

flanks. They carried both the mining-works and the enemy position on the western slopes of Hill 70—a broad, flat-topped mound stretching more than half a mile across—as well as the redoubt on its north-east corner. On they went, as already stated, as far as the western outskirts of Cité St. Auguste, entirely heedless of the



Trophies of the British Advance: Captured German field-guns from the battlefields of Loos and Hulluch exhibited on the Horse Guards Parade, London

company, he rallied them when, later in the morning, the order was given to consolidate on the reverse slope of Hill 70, "and held his new position", states the *Gazette*, in announcing his award of the Military Cross, "with great bravery and resource until relieved".

While the prisoners were being rounded up, and Loos itself cleared, other battalions of the 15th had swept eastwards to Pit 14 *bis* and Hill 70, though perilously exposed on both

enfilade fire which poured on them with increasing intensity as they came within range of the guns of Lens and the elaborate entrenchments still holding up the British advance towards Hulluch. They were not strong enough alone to hold all the ground thus won; and no adequate support was available. Until the enemy's enfilading guns could be silenced, indeed, it was more than likely that reinforcements would have merely swelled the list of casualties,



already heavy enough, with the German batteries now concentrating on this most threatening danger zone. These indomitable Scotsmen had forged a path which, under more favourable conditions, would have become a high road to the whole Douai Plain; but, in the circumstances, they were forced to retire. German reserves were being rushed up from Lens, and machine-guns were spitting from every quarter. Exhausted by the very vigour of their victorious advance, uncertain of their direction, and sadly weakened in numbers, the Scotsmen were pressed back, sowing the ground with their dead, but retiring in good order to the western slopes of Hill 70. Here they dug themselves in, just below the redoubt from which they had forced the Germans in their first irresistible charge, but subsequently reoccupied by the enemy, who also recaptured Pit 14 *bis*. Now ensued the long, desperate struggle which makes Hill 70 as sanguinary a landmark in the history of the war as Hill 60, near Ypres. One of its V.C. heroes was Temporary Second-Lieutenant Frederick H. Johnson, who was with a section of his company of the Royal Engineers. Although wounded in the leg, he stuck to his duty throughout the day, leading several charges on the German redoubt, and repeatedly rallying the men around him.

"By his splendid example and cool courage", says the *Gazette*, "he was mainly instrumental in saving the situation, and in establishing firmly his part of the position which had been taken. He remained at his post until relieved in the evening."

In the meanwhile the 1st Division, attacking the centre of the main position on the left flank of the 15th, in the direction of Hulluch, had still failed to make any progress with its right brigade, south of Lone Tree. Here the enemy's front system of trenches, with its concealed barriers of barbed-wire entanglements, which could only be subjected to indirect fire, seems to have escaped most of the pounding from the British guns. This wedge, thrust right into the middle of the battle, seriously affected the whole plan of attack. It not only left the left flank of the 15th Division exposed, but it also gave the enemy sufficient time to collect reserves behind his strong second line. While the right brigade of the 1st Division was striving in vain to break through this intact stronghold—gas fumes adding to the appalling difficulties of its task—the left brigade, undeterred by the danger on its right, succeeded in pushing forward and penetrating into the outskirts of the village of Hulluch, capturing some gun-positions on the way. Some units are reported to have swept right through Hulluch, and even—according to the few survivors who returned—as far as Benifontaine, but they were badly cut up.

The determined advance of this brigade, as Sir John French wrote in his dispatch, was most praiseworthy; and, combined with the action of divisional reserves, was at length instrumental in causing the surrender of the Germans, some 500 strong, who had been holding up the rest of the division south of Lone Tree. The

whole region round this fatal redoubt was described by one of the surviving officers as an absolute shambles. It was only the superb courage of the infantry which finally won a way through. The gunners stood up and cheered again and again as they watched their heroic charges. How these regiments fought and suffered may be judged from the brief official record in the *Gazette* of the deeds which won the posthumous honour of the Victoria Cross for Sergeant Harry Wells, of the 2nd Royal Sussex Regiment. The Royal Sussex advanced from the British line near Le Rutoire, and many of them fell back in the first assault suffering from gas fumes. When his platoon commander was killed Sergeant Wells took command, and led his men forward to within 15 yards of the German wire:

"Nearly half the platoon were killed or wounded, and the remainder were much shaken, but with the utmost coolness and bravery Sergeant Wells rallied them and led them forward. Finally, when very few were left, he stood up and urged them forward once more, but while doing this he was killed. He gave a magnificent example of courage and determination."

Captain A. M. Read, of the 1st Northamptons, also lost his life in winning the Victoria Cross at this point. Although himself partially gassed, he went out several times in order to rally disorganized parties of different units and lead them back to the firing-line. While still engaged in this heroic work, utterly regardless of danger, he was mortally wounded. Cap-

tain Read, who had been noted for conspicuous bravery on several previous occasions, was a well-known army athlete, with a splendid record as a boxer. Another noble example of Victoria Cross courage was given on this stricken field by one of the youngest men in the 2nd King's Royal Rifle Corps—Private George Peachment, who saw his company commander, Captain Dubs, lying wounded when our front line was compelled to retire before those infernal wire entanglements, and crawled back to assist him:

"The enemy's fire was intense, but, though there was a shell-hole quite close, in which a few men had taken cover, Private Peachment never thought of saving himself. He knelt in the open by his officer and tried to help him, but while doing this he was first wounded by a bomb and a



Captain A. M. Read, 1st Battalion Northamptonshire Regiment, mortally wounded while winning the Victoria Cross, September 25, 1915



Private George Peachmont, 2nd King's Royal Rifle Corps, who gave his life for his officer, and earned the Victoria Cross

minute later mortally wounded by a rifle bullet."<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the coolest act of the day in this section of the field was that of Private Arthur Vickers, of the 2nd Royal Warwicks, who, on his own initiative, calmly advanced in front of his company under a storm of shell-, rifle-, and machine-gun fire, and cut the wires which were holding up a great part of the battalion. Although it was broad daylight at the time, he carried out this work standing up. His fearless action, for which he too received the Victoria Cross, contributed largely to the final success of the assault.

<sup>1</sup> Captain P. J. R. Currie and Second-Lieutenant T. R. Reid, also of the 2nd King's Royal Rifles, won the Military Cross for conspicuous gallantry on the same occasion.

The 1st London Scottish again distinguished themselves in the stubborn fighting south of Lone Tree. One of the D.S.O.'s fell to Captain C. J. Low, of this battalion, "who led his company with great skill in the attack," to quote from the official record, "and when hung up by German wire maintained his position in spite of heavy machine-gun fire from both flanks. By this means he largely induced the German surrender, after which he at once marched forward and occupied their third line." Sergeant K. S. Bowron, of the London Scottish, also won the D.C.M. on the same occasion, when he crawled forward alone, and though wounded in doing so, completed his reconnaissance, returning with valuable information."

This brings us to the end of the first day's work of the 4th Corps, the arrangement, the planning, and execution of which, declares the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, as well as the conduct of the troops engaged, "were most efficient and praiseworthy".

To the left of Rawlinson's men the 1st Corps, under Gough, had meantime been battling with varying fortunes along the front extending from Vermelles past the Hohenzollern Redoubt to the death-strewn district among the brickfields farther north. The famous 7th Division, under Major-General Sir Thompson Capper, who played a lion's share in the Allies' victory at the First Battle of Ypres, when the 7th was reduced to some 2000 men, added fresh lustre to its fame by an immediate triumph. In a very short time Capper's troops had



not only reached and captured the western edge of the fortified stone quarries lying between Hulluch and the Hohenzollern Redoubt, but had reached Cité St. Elie beyond. Some advanced even to the village of Haisnes, "the tendency of the action",

ever-increasing odds, until nearly sunset, when Captain Adamson, finding himself still unsupported, and the enemy gradually hemming him in on all sides, withdrew his gallant Gordons—or what was left of them—and brought them back in good order to



Before they were stormed by the Seventh British Division: the Quarries near Hulluch in the hands of the enemy (reproduced from a German photograph)

as the Field-Marshal points out, "being to draw the troops northwards".

The 8th Gordon Highlanders were the heroes of this "Farthest North" assault, superbly led by Captain J. E. Adamson, who dashed with the leading company through shot and shell across the open, far ahead of any other detachment, cutting a way through three lines of wire, and entering Haisnes by eight o'clock that morning. Here they remained, fighting hard against

the British lines. It was a repetition of the fate which had overtaken the Scotsmen of the Second New Army at Cité St. Auguste but a few hours earlier. For his courage and fine leadership Captain Adamson received the D.S.O. By the Quarries themselves—transformed by the ingenuity of German engineers into fortresses of amazing strength—Captain A. W. Sutcliffe, attached from the 3rd to the 2nd Border Regiment, had meantime

earned the Military Cross for a daring charge at the head of his company which resulted in the capture of a machine-gun and 150 prisoners.

The 8th Devonshire Regiment suffered grievously but greatly distinguished itself both in the advance and afterwards in holding on to a vital section of the Hulluch road. When all the officers had been killed or wounded, Company Sergeant-Major A. Bryant assumed command, and won the D.C.M. by his firm handling of a critical situation, when the enemy succeeded in creeping round the flank of the position after dark. He was finally stunned by a German bomb while attempting to save one of his sergeants. That night Quartermaster-Sergeant H. Davey, of the same battalion, while driving up with rations, met some men of another unit who were disorganized and retiring in confusion. Borrowing a rifle and bayonet our gallant quartermaster-sergeant rallied the men and led them back to a trench in front, where he took command, remaining until a staff-officer appeared. "By his prompt action", says the *Gazette*, in recording his award of the D.C.M., "he was instrumental in holding valuable ground." The 8th Devons also captured four of the field-guns which stood to the credit of the 7th Division at the close of the battle. For this, and for conspicuous gallantry throughout the day, Captain K. D. H. Gwynn received the D.S.O. He took command at 7.15 a.m., when all the other officers of the 8th Devons, save one second lieutenant, had been killed or wounded, and held on to the position captured in the morning

until 7.30 p.m., when he was himself wounded by a bomb.

Another of the captured field-guns fell to the 9th Devons, other units mentioned for having added to the same collection being the 2nd Gordon Highlanders, 1/6 Gordon Highlanders, 2nd Border Regiment, and the 8th Royal Berkshire Regiment. The 2nd Gordons suffered heavy casualties, but lived up to their high traditions. When their commanding officer fell wounded early in the morning, Major H. A. Ross took command, and leading the battalion with excellent judgment throughout, held on to a perilous position near Hulluch all day. Though himself badly gassed, Major Ross, who subsequently received the D.S.O., remained with the battalion till it came back into support, and then only left it on being ordered into hospital. The 6th Gordons—the Territorial Battalion from Banff and Donside—who, as already stated, captured another of the German field-guns, also clung with superb courage to the advanced position which they had captured in the same exposed regions. Their commanding officer was killed, but Major James Dawson, who then took command, held on all through the day and up to midnight, "displaying great coolness and judgment," says the *Gazette*, in recording his award among the D.S.O.'s.

Of countless other deeds of gallantry in this part of the battle-field we can unfortunately mention only one or two. Second-Lieutenant M. S. Gunn, attached to the 1st from the 3rd Battalion Black Watch, not only brought his machine-guns into action on two occasions under furious rifle- and shell-

fire in order to support attacks, but also rescued many men who were lying wounded between the lines. For this he received the Military Cross—also conferred upon Captain Joseph Pringle, of the 1st Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, who, when all the company officers of the battalion had been either killed or wounded, continued to carry on the attack, and was largely responsible for the capture and consolidation of an advanced position in front of Hulluch village. Sergeant W. D. Sowter, who received the D.C.M., materially assisted in this success, handling his machine-guns with splendid initiative when both the machine-gun officers had been wounded. Finally, we may mention among the honours won by the 8th Royal Berkshires, the Military Cross awarded to Captain Douglas Tosetti, who led his men into the German trenches though wounded early in the assault, and held on till the evening, when forced to leave for medical attention; and to Second-Lieutenant T. B. Lawrence, who, when the machine-gun officer had been killed, brought two guns into action close to Hulluch, and captured two German field-guns; and the D.C.M. won by Regimental-Sergeant-Major Lainsbury, of the same battalion, who, though slightly gassed at the beginning of the action, rallied about sixty men, and fought his way through to Hulluch, where, as on many previous occasions, he set a fine example of bravery and devotion to duty.

The complete success of the 7th Division had been dependent upon the advance of the 9th (Scottish) Division of the First New Army, which, unfor-

tunately, had to reckon with the most formidable of all the German fortifications on this tremendous battle-field—the Hohenzollern Redoubt. The 26th Brigade on the right had carried the mighty waste-heap, known as Fosse 8, after heavy fighting, and the 28th Brigade had captured the first line of the German trenches east of the Vermelles railway. At this point, however, fighting had been extremely severe, and the 26th, suffering considerable losses, had been driven back to its original trenches. It is difficult to obtain a clear idea of the whole stupendous struggle which raged all day round this desperately-disputed area—"The Battle of the Slag-heaps", as "Ian Hay"—otherwise Captain Beith, of the 10th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders—describes it in his delightful chronicle of *The First Hundred Thousand*; for it was here that the Scotsmen of "K.(1)", with their chronicler himself among them, played their part in the Great Push in September 25, 1915. That most important factor in the situation—a labyrinth as formidable in its way as the celebrated earthworks at Souchez, which the French troops on our right captured only after months of violent fighting—had been thrust forward from the German lines to within a hundred yards of our own. Ian Hay describes it as "a great promontory, a maze of trenches, machine-gun emplacements, and barbed wire, all flush with or under the ground, and terribly difficult to cripple by shell-fire". It was proudly named the Hohenzollern Redoubt by its constructors, and proved a veritable Hougomont. Attached to



its parent line were two communication-trenches which the British army, "not to be outdone in reverence to the most august of dynasties," says Ian Hay, named Big and Little Willie respectively. Ian Hay's battalion lived and died up to its regiment's great traditions in the operations against Fosse 8, the defences of which had

for that occasion must unfortunately suffice to bring their bravery home. When Captain Farmer, of the 7th Seaforths, fell wounded, Private G. M'Gill dressed his wound and shot two Germans who attempted to take his officer prisoner.

"He then", adds the *Gazette*, in recording his award of the D.C.M., "lay over his



Gas and Smoke in the British Offensive: the Attack on the Hohenzollern Redoubt, September 25, 1915

The cloud of smoke and gas can be seen on the left and right of the picture. The British trenches and approaches can be traced by the chalk which has been excavated. Fosse 8 lies behind the cloud of smoke to the right. The Hohenzollern Redoubt is this side of Fosse 8. Official photograph taken by permission of the Commander-in-chief, British Expeditionary Force, and passed by the Chief Field Censor for reproduction. (Crown copyright reserved.)

three communication-trenches into the Hohenzollern Redoubt. Private D. Richardson showed also how the Black Watch of "K. (1)", the 8th Royal Highlanders, could fight when, although six times wounded in this initial attack, he continued to work his machine-gun until at length it was blown to pieces by a shell, and he himself again seriously wounded. The 7th Seaforth Highlanders, too, won much honour this day, both round about Fosse 8 and the Redoubt itself, though one incident from the list of its awards

officer for two hours to protect him from shrapnel bullets. Later, still under a hot fire, he dragged Captain Farmer to a trench, a bullet passing through his kilt as he was doing so. Again near the dressing-station he used his own body to shield his officer from the shrapnel-fire, which was heavy. His gallantry and self-sacrifice were beyond praise."

The 8th Gordon Highlanders greatly distinguished themselves here as well as at Haisnes. One company in the attack on the Hohenzollern was commanded by Major David M'Leod, who



was wounded at the beginning, but continued to lead his men forward until he was hit a third time, and fell from sheer exhaustion. He was subsequently decorated with the D.S.O. One of the Distinguished Conduct Medals won by the 8th Gordons on that occasion fell to Lance-Sergeant J. Morrice, who, observing that some German bombers had attacked and captured a machine-gun of another British regiment, rushed up and bayoneted the whole party, afterwards bringing the gun back to our lines in triumph. It was a feat worthy of the Gay Gordons.

Heavy rain had fallen throughout the day, which, as Sir John French observed, was very detrimental to efficient observation of fire and reconnaissance by air-craft. We have also heard on good authority that a shortage of bombs had not a little to do with the difficulty in holding the ground won in this fierce hand-to-hand combat. Bombs were worth their weight in gold among the maze of traverse trenches and subterranean strongholds—some of the Hohenzollern dug-outs were 30 feet deep—defended by an enemy possessing apparently unlimited stores of ammunition, and dominated by guns at Auchy and other German defence-works, which rendered it practically impossible to maintain adequate supplies across the shell-swept area from the British lines. A brave private of the 5th Cameron Highlanders—J. Macdonald—saved the situation at one point in Fosse Trench on the 25th, when the right of our front line was held up by the fire of one of the enemy's machine-guns.

Private Macdonald, with a precious store of bombs, worked his way round alone, and put the gun out of action, thus winning the D.C.M.

The end of all this confused and violent warfare on the 25th appears to have been that besides, for the time being, securing Fosse 8, we had also occupied part of the Hohenzollern Redoubt, certain vital sections of which, however, remained in possession of the enemy. South of the La Bassée Canal, among the brick-stacks of Cuinchy, on the extreme left of the main assault, the advance had met with no success. Many of our bravest here fell beneath the deluge of German shells and machine-gun fire. Details are entirely lacking in the Field-Marshal's dispatch, but we may judge the nature of the fighting from the official record in the *Gazette* of how Private Doolan, of the 1st Liverpools, won the D.C.M. The Liverpools at Cuinchy, like the right of the 1st Division before Hulluch, advanced only to find the enemy's wire still unbroken, and lost heavily in vain attempts to hack a way through.

"Private Doolan", we are told, "remained there under a very heavy fire until ordered to return. Later, he went out several times to bring in wounded men. On the last occasion he was accompanied by Private Ivory, 1st King's Royal Rifle Corps, whom he carried in when severely wounded."

Faced with impregnable defences, the left wing of Gough's First Army could thus make no more headway south of La Bassée Canal than the remaining units in their feint attacks to the north, near Givenchy and Festubert.



On the British front, therefore, the net result of the main attack at the end of the day had been disappointing to those who had entertained hopes of smashing a mighty path through the German line and of a continuous advance which would carry the tide of battle far from those blood-soaked fields of France. But we had at least disillusioned the enemy as well. We had annihilated a double line of entrenchments—the work of nearly a year—which he had insolently boasted as unconquerable; we had captured and consolidated Loos, established ourselves, though more precariously, in the defences of Hill 70, the Quarries, Fosse 8, and the Hohenzollern Redoubt, and thrust a formidable wedge into his positions over a distance of 6500 yards. At nightfall on the 25th, after incessant fighting and numerous German counter-attacks, the line was, roughly, as follows: From the Double Crassier to south of Loos, circling that town by the western slopes of Hill 70; thence by the Quarries and western end of Cité St. Elie to the east of Fosse 8, and so back to our original line.

“Not so dusty for a start,” as the cheerful major says in *The First Hundred Thousand*, at the close of the day. “. . . we

shall attack again, and gain more ground, or at least keep the Boche exceedingly busy. That is our allotted task in this entertainment—to go on hammering the Hun, occupying his attention and using up his reserves, regardless of whether we gain ground or lose it, while our French pals on the right are pushing him off the map. At least that is my theory.”

Here, for the moment, we must leave them, to continue the fluctuating fortunes of this protracted struggle in another chapter. Ian Hay's major was probably nearer the truth than were most experts who dogmatized on the subject with equal ignorance of the official mind. The British troops, as well as the Tenth French Army on their right—now, as we shall see in due course, storming the village of Souchez and the heights of Vimy “with a bravery and determination”, wrote Sir John French, “which went far to instil hope and spirit into the Allied Forces”—were apparently cast to play second fiddle to General Castelnau, who, if he did not push the Huns off the map of France, won a victory in Champagne that day which dealt them a staggering blow, and, with the more limited successes in Artois, rudely disturbed all his plans.

F. A. M.

## CHAPTER X

## THE INVASION OF SERBIA

(October–December, 1915)

Bulgaria and the Austro-German Powers—The Mistaken Diplomacy of the Entente—Greece and Serbia—Serbian Salient—Configuration of Attacks on Serbia—Armies of Koëvess and Gallwitz—Advance at Semendria and Ram—The Defences of Belgrade—Fall of the City—The Southward Retreat of the Serbians—Bulgarian First and Second Armies—Abandonment of Nish—Second Bulgarian Army bars the Retreat to Greece at Vranje and Veles—The Franco-British Relief Expedition—Preliminary Successes—Final Check—Failure to get in Touch with Serbians—The Sole Road of Retreat to Albania—Withdrawal of General Sarrail's Force.

**I**N a letter which was found among the papers of Captain Von Papen, the German attaché in Washington, was one from Prince H. Hatzfeldt, which proved to be true, whereas the confidences circulated in the British House of Commons after the harvest had been garnered that Bulgaria was



The Greek Mobilization: Reservists arriving at Salonika

feld in which the Prince, writing in the summer of 1915, gave some rather uncertain reasons for believing that Bulgaria would "certainly come in on our side after the harvest at the end of August". Prince Hatzfeldt's infor-

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"all right", provided that no premature announcements found their way into the newspapers, proved to be false. But though the German Headquarters Staff may have been positive of Ferdinand's intentions, it was not

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everybody's secret; and there is a loophole for doubt whether Ferdinand would have kept to his bargain with Germany if it had not been for one factor which reduced his risk to a minimum. The French publicists, who throughout the war were less fettered

does appear credible. The Serbians themselves had no belief that Bulgaria would maintain her neutrality except under a threat of force by the Entente; and sighted the beginning of the end as soon as Bulgaria, through the mouth of Radovslavoff, began to



"The Fox of the Balkans": a characteristic snapshot of Ferdinand of Bulgaria talking to General Ivanoff

in airing their opinions on policy than their British confrères, said quite plainly what this factor was. It was Greece. Greece, they averred, was bound to neutrality by secret agreement with Bulgaria. The treaty is not a likely story; but that Germany was in a position to assure Bulgaria that Greece would not turn the Bulgarian flank when an attack was made on Serbia,

make extortionate demands for territorial compensations in Macedonia. There is nothing to show whether the Serbians were surprised at the Greek refusal to come to their help. From the few things they have said or written it appears that they thought there was little hope for them after their request for military aid from Great Britain and France was rejected



in July. It is quite clear why the appeal was rejected. The British Head-quarters Staff thought that all the men it had to spare would be wanted for the September "Push" in France. They were. But the September campaign did not resolve itself into the great advance. As shown in Chapters IX and XI, it achieved a measure of success and stopped. If it had been an overwhelming success Serbia's troubles would have been ended automatically, for the Germans would not have had the forces with which to prosecute them. But as soon as the September thrust was at an end, and any further advance in the West improbable, then with Italy held and Russia immobilized, there was nothing to prevent the Germans from fitting out a new expedition in their usual workmanlike style. Bulgaria recognized it. Greece recognized it. Serbia recognized it, and according to unofficial Serbian reports begged to be allowed to concentrate troops on the Bulgarian frontier. A Serbian officer writing in the *Fortnightly Review* of February, 1915, defined the attitude of the Allies as follows:—

"To the very last they appeared to believe that Ferdinand would never venture to come into conflict with Russia, Britain, and France. As usual, the weak had to give way: we allowed the Bulgars to mobilize and concentrate. When they were quite ready, and the Austro-Germans were making good progress in the north, they began hostilities with the absolute certainty of success, for the Serbian army numbered barely 200,000 men, as against some 600,000 Austro-Germans and Bulgars with plentiful artillery and unlimited ammunition."

At that the preliminary situation

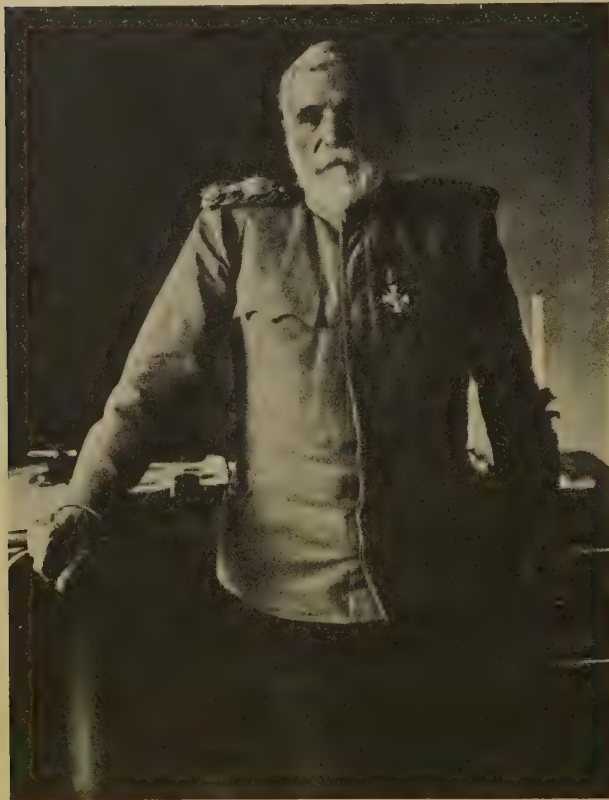
may be left, without any further attempt to apportion the blame to Russia for having been deceived at Sofia as to the resolution of Bulgaria, or to Britain for having rested on the broken reed of Greece. It is reasonable to suppose that nothing but a reversal of the checks the Allies had suffered in the field, the Russians in Poland and the British in Gallipoli, would have affected the course of events very much.

As neither mobilization nor concentration of 600,000 men can be effected under many weeks, the German Head-quarters Staff, in conjunction with the Bulgarian Staff, with whom they had conferred in September, must have matured their plans for some time. Their task was not a difficult one, and it resembled in many respects the closing of a salient, such as had been created on a small scale at Przemysl or Wilna, and on a larger scale about Warsaw. Serbia was itself a salient with Austria-Hungary on the northern and Bulgaria on the eastern side. While only an attack from the direction of Austria-Hungary on the north was to be met, the enemy would himself have to *create* a salient in order to secure victory. In the Austrian attack of 1914 this had been done by holding the Serbians on the northern or Danube frontier with one army, while another army marched southwards along the Drina in order to outflank the Serbians on the west. That attempt had a preliminary measure of success. It was repelled because it was not undertaken with large enough forces, or with forces of good fighting quality and leadership. In the campaign undertaken a year

later the Austrian armies were led and stiffened by Germans, and were incomparably better than the forces of the first invasion. But apart from this superiority, it was quite unnecessary for the Austro-Germans to undertake

the Danube prolonged by the River Save. From the western side of the  $\sqcap$  drops the River Drina, which rises in Montenegro. The upright of the  $\sqcap$  is the River Morava, which far to the south reaches almost to the head-

waters of the River Vardar flowing in the opposite direction into the Ægean at Salonika. The cross-bar of the  $\sqcap$  is the river called the Western Morava, which flows into the Morava at Nish, the Serbian capital. An outflanking attack which came from the north and the west would try to get on to this cross-bar from the west, and so get behind an army defending the top-bar. If, in addition to assailing the top-bar, other armies should assail the upright along nearly the whole of its length, above and below the cross-bar, it is quite clear that the defending army anywhere near the top of the  $\sqcap$  would be in a very precarious position. Furthermore, the threat of outflanking by the west, so



The Commander of the Serbian Army: Field-Marshal Putnik

more than a threat of outflanking on the western wing, because as soon as the Bulgarian armies got into motion, the Serbians were by that very fact already outflanked on the east.

The campaign against Serbia can be figured in the simplest way by denoting the country by a reversed capital  $\sqcap$ . The top bar of the  $\sqcap$  is

as to seize the cross-bar, would be an additional danger, though the threat might never be brought into operation. During the two months' campaign this western outflanking threat never attracted much attention to itself. The Serbians made no attempt to meet it. Their hands were too full with the far more lethal outflanking

attack by the Bulgarians on the east. The west they had to abandon.

The Austro-German forces of about 400,000 men under the supreme command of General von Mackensen were concentrated north of the Danube in the first week in October, 1915. They consisted of two armies, the First army under General Koëvess, of Austrians and Germans, which was placed to the west of Belgrade, and was in touch with a smaller Austrian force of perhaps two divisions still farther to the west; and a Second army on which it was expected that the brunt of the fighting would fall, and which was chiefly of German troops commanded by General Gallwitz, who had been brought from the Niemen. The army of General Gallwitz was to cross the Danube about twenty to twenty-five miles east of Belgrade at Semendria and Ram, while that of General Koëvess was to cross the Save and advance on Belgrade from the south-west as well as from the north. The remaining western Austrian force, which was concentrated at Vishegrad, was to cross the Drina and hold out a hand to Koëvess.

On October 7th the whole force, moving southwards on a widely extended front, began to put its programme through. Koëvess crossed the Save at Zabrez, south-west of Belgrade; the western force at Vishegrad crossed the Drina; and the remaining army under Gallwitz crossed the Danube. The Serbian leaders, who no longer were in a position to withdraw rapidly to the south, but who were without illusions as to the fate of their forces if they offered a prolonged resistance to the superior forces

bearing down on them, elected for a fighting retreat. It was a form of resistance which cost Serbia dear; it had the advantage from the point of view of their Allies, of making the Austro-German advance costly. It was the sole compensation of the campaign, so that it may be granted a sentence of commentary. The



The Red Cross in the Balkans: a British nurse talking to the director of one of the Serbian Reserve Hospitals

German-Austrian forces had to fight hard for their gains; the Bulgarians who were the outflanking forces had by comparison an easy task, and suffered much fewer losses. In keeping with their policy of retreating while fighting, and because they were very much inferior in artillery, the Serbians offered no great resistance to the crossing of the rivers, but assailed the German bridgeheads with ferocity when the troops were across. The



Germans took no unnecessary risks in supporting their crossing, and at Semendria brought up a devastating weight of artillery. They bombarded the town with 12-inch and 9.2-inch howitzers, with 6-inch quick-firer and a large number of 4-inch guns, all throwing high-explosive shells.

"There was besides," wrote Lieutenant Hilton Young, the member for Norwich who was with the British naval detachment on the Danube, "a whole menagerie of field-guns, throwing shrapnel of four different calibres. The Serbian Staff counted a hundred guns engaged in the bombardment. Very rightly they made no reply, but kept their positions concealed, waiting for the crossing. This rain of projectiles lasted two days and two nights. The Serbian batteries were outweighed and outranged. . . . Before daybreak on the second night of the bombardment we were in the old fortress of the town weighing out our stuff, when they turned the howitzers on the fortress and began to knock it about our ears. Shortly after that they began to cross in boats all along the river front, covered by heavy rifle and machine-gun fire."

These experiences were repeated at the crossing at Ram, where three assaults were made, and farther west in the German-Austrian advance on Belgrade. The defences of Belgrade had never been very strong, and though they had been improved by a French "naval mission", and a British naval detachment under Admiral Troubridge, they were still inferior to the metal the Germans were able to bring to bear on them. The French had three 9-inch naval guns on the hills about Belgrade; the British had eight 4.7 naval guns divided into four batteries of two guns each. The British

had also laid mine-fields in the Danube (as well as in the Save), and had equipped a patrol-boat, jocularly called *The Terror of the Danube*, with dropping gear for torpedoes. A Russian naval detachment had four naval guns in the Belgrade fortress, and the Serbians under General Zivkovitch had a few howitzer batteries and field-guns. In fact, a great deal had been done to make the passage of the Danube a very hard job for the Germans; and if it had not been necessary to weaken the Belgrade defences by withdrawing batteries and troops to the Bulgarian frontier, and to send away also the invaluable French flying detachment of ten aeroplanes, the crossings of the Save and Danube might have had a different upshot. But the weakening of the defences was the necessary consequence of all that had gone before; and no temporary expedients could have been effectual in holding up the Austro-German advance for long. Their batteries began work on October 4, but in the absence of the French aeroplanes the character of the attack was not fully realized; and the suspicion that this was the beginning of the end was scarcely felt till the bombardment was resumed at night. It went on all next day, and the day after that—

"One of the most unpleasant I ever spent," wrote a Serbian officer.<sup>1</sup> "There was one continuous roar of guns firing anywhere, everywhere. A heavy black cloud of smoke hung over Belgrade. Many houses were on fire, and could not be saved owing to the destruction of the water-main, and in every direction the exploding shells threw

<sup>1</sup> *Fortnightly Review*, February, 1915.

up towering pillars of smoke, bricks, and dust. One heavy battery was gradually increasing its range towards the main road, where hundreds of women and children were hurrying along. As we watched, two shells burst on the road itself, and when

furnished, in the *Cologne Gazette*, by a joyful German description of the fight for Belgrade. "Such of the inhabitants as did not take refuge in their cellars", observes the German corres-

pondent, "could be seen fleeing panic-stricken to the hilly country south of Belgrade." So the Germans sent a shell or two to expedite their movements.

All accounts agree on the bitterness of the fighting for the town itself, though the Serbians knew it could not be saved. The correspondent of the *Cologne Gazette* wrote that the first Austro - Hungarian troops crossed the Danube on rafts and pontoons in the early morning of October 7, and held on in front of an embankment held by the Serbians. On the night of the 7th more troops were got across, and the Belgrade fortress of Kali Megdan, which had been shelling



After the Third Austrian Bombardment: Street Scene in Belgrade in October, 1915

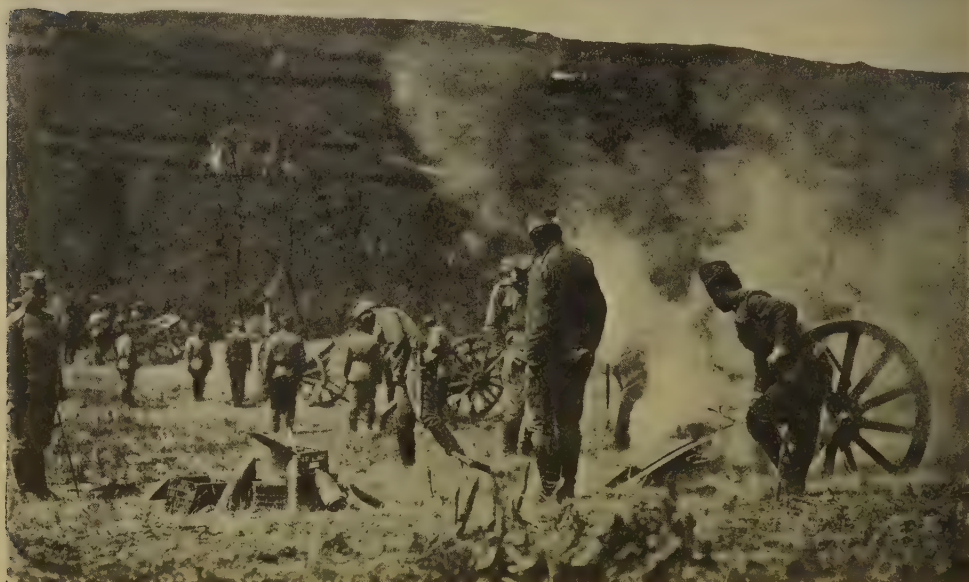
the smoke blew clear we saw the shattered remnants of what had been two carts filled with women and children. . . . Seeing that the enemy had at least 150 guns to our 30, we realized that the game was up."

A striking commentary on one sentence in the Serbian officer's tale is

them, was silenced. The Serbian and Armstrong guns on the Vratzas Hill, served by French and British gunners, made a last effort to hold the advance, and did not stop firing till their guns were wrecked—they had fought for three days and nights. The imagin

ative German correspondent said that the remains of the gunners were found "mangled beyond recognition" by the side of their pieces. That is not exactly true. The British casualties were two killed and two wounded. Even when the Germans and Austrians were across, there was a good deal of desultory fighting. The Germans speak of

Semendria and Ram the Serbians lined the hills and offered a punishing resistance to the further advance of the armies of Koëvess and of Gallwitz. Eight miles south of Belgrade they held on to Mount Avala for five days before giving way to Koëvess. Gallwitz on the same day stormed Pozarevat, which is about five miles south



With the Serbian Artillery at the Front: a 6-inch Howitzer Battery in Action

house-to-house fighting in Belgrade; and one English correspondent, who was not there, says that every street corner was a citadel. But the more prosaic version, that the unhappy townspeople fled for their lives, and that the Serbian troops were withdrawn when resistance was seen to be futile, is nearer to the truth. In the Kali Megdan fortress the Serbian flag was kept flying till October 9.

South of Belgrade and south of

of the Danube, and midway between Semendria and Ram. It is an important road junction, one road going south to Petrovatz, another east to Milonavatz and thence to Negotin and to Bulgaria. After storming Pozarevat, von Gallwitz was able to deploy his army on a broad front of forty miles. He then began to move slowly southwards along the right or eastern bank of the Morava. His colleague Koëvess, after some delay



in taking the fortified town of Obrenovatz, south-west of Belgrade, began to move parallel with him on the western bank of the Morava, the two pushing the Serbians in front of them. The movement was slow, because the country is hilly as soon as the valley plain of the Danube is left behind; but it was continuous and connected, Koëvess being joined on the west by the Visegrad Divisions, Gallwitz edging eastwards towards the Bulgarian frontier. By about the 20th the Serbians, occupying what in different circumstances would have been a good line of defence, were stretched from the River Kolubara to the River Mlava, which is east of the Morava.

It was a line which, however strong, was untenable, because by this date the Bulgarian threat had developed. The Bulgarian forces were concentrated in two armies. The First or Northern Army, under General Bodajeff, was to strike westwards by way of the Timok towards the north-east corner of Serbia. It would march to Negotin and at Zaitchar on the railway, and would thus strike at the right flank of the Serbians who were opposing Mackensen's drive. Its direction was along a line drawn north of Nish, and it would aim at getting in touch with Gallwitz's deploying forces. If, therefore, the Serbians held on too long against Gallwitz they would be caught on their right flank. The project of the Second Bulgarian Army, which was also marching westwards, but well to the south of Nish, was less direct, but might become more damaging to the Serbian forces should they hold on to northern and north-eastern

Serbia too bravely or too long. General Teodoroff, who commanded it, was to push on through Kustendil to Vranje and seize the Vardar Valley railway, which led from Nish southwards. He was then to push on to Uskub, which is still farther south on the Nish-Vranje-Kumanovo-Uskub and Vardar Valley railway, and is also a main junction of important roads. Another Division of his army, also pushing westwards, but farther south, was to seize Veles and push on from there to Uskub. If this were done, and the Bulgarians could get astride the railway south of Nish, while the Serbians were fighting in the north, the Serbian retreat towards Greece by way of the Vardar Valley would be cut off.

Three sides of the salient in which the Serbian army was enclosed would thus be barred against them. There would remain a fourth side, on the west, by which, and by which alone, the Serbians could escape, making their way across Albania towards Scutari. This had not been forgotten in the Austro-German-Bulgarian plan of campaign. The two Austrian Divisions far to the west, which had been concentrated at Visegrad, and, now that the Serbians had been driven out of Belgrade, would encounter no opposition (unless the Montenegrins should offer it), were to march southwards through the old Sandjak of Novi Bazar, past Usitze and the Montenegrin border, and so cut off the Serbian retreat to Scutari. The Serbians would thus be enclosed on all four sides; the salient would be shut.

The Serbians facing Koëvess and Gallwitz continued to be pressed

slowly backwards on both sides of the Morava, and on October 31 they had to abandon their arsenal at Kragujevatz, among the lower hills in the mountain complex west of the Morava. The Bulgarian First Army, under Bodajeff, had stormed the frontier fortress of Zaitchar four days before (October 27), and was reaching out one hand to Gallwitz and the other hand towards the old Serbian capital of Nish. There was a danger at this time that the Serbian army, now situated between the Morava and the Western Morava, would be held and hammered there till the encircling movement could be completed. Bodajeff's left wing entered Nish on November 5. His right wing got into touch with Gallwitz on the following day at Krivivir, and the two sides of the salient were joined. Gallwitz pushed on to Krushevatz, which is on the Western Morava Valley and Railway, and, storming the heights, captured it on November 10, after three days' fierce fighting. Meanwhile the Vishegrad force on the extreme west had reached Usitze, which is the terminus of the Western Morava Valley railway, and so by the end of the first week in November the whole of the Western Morava Valley was in Austro-German hands. The Morava Valley itself down to Nish was occupied by Bulgarians; the upper half of Serbia—old Serbia—was gone.

That was not the full extent of the mischief. The Second Bulgarian Army, under Teodoroff, had seized Vranje, on the railway below Nish, so cutting off the retreat by railway, and another column pushed on to Veles,

farther south. This the Bulgarians took on October 20. They were thrown out by the Serbians two days later, but occupied the place definitively on October 29. From Veles one column was sent on to Uskub, the importance of which has been already stated. Close to the two waterways traversing Serbia—the Morava flowing north to the Danube, the Vardar flowing south to the Ægean, near Salonika—Uskub is the strategic centre of Macedonia because it commands the main avenues for the movements of troops, including the four main roads to Belgrade, Sofia, Salonika, and Durazzo on the Adriatic. Uskub was seized by the Bulgarians on October 24, the weak Serbian force being driven out without much difficulty, and from Uskub, General Teodoroff sent a column up to Katchanik, on the railway running north to Mitrovitza. (From Mitrovitza a road runs to Novi Bazar, down towards which the Western Austrian Divisions were marching, though between Novi Bazar and Usitze is mountainous country.) With Katchanik occupied, the loophole for the retreating Serbians was lessening. General Teodoroff, acting no doubt under Mackensen's instructions, sent a column about 15,000 strong from Veles to march on Monastir, and so to lessen the gap still further.

Meanwhile the Franco-British forces which had started weeks, if not months, too late to be of much use, were doing what they could, and were doing more than at one time it seemed likely they would be able to effect. The only thing they could do would be to strike at these southern forces of General Teodoroff. A force of considerably



British Help for the Serbians: Landing the first contingent of our troops at Salonika



less than 100,000 had landed at Salonika on October 5. At that time the British Head-quarters Staff were still resolved that it was throwing

The flow of troops began, and like the movement of a row of marbles when the nearest one is set in motion, the troops began to move out of Salonika

on the 14th. On that date they were at Valandova near Ghevgeli on the railway. The French were marched on to Strumnitza, crossing the Greek frontier into Macedonia on October 21, while the British on the right wing marched to the north of Lake Doiran. The French had a fight at Rabrov, between Strumnitza and the railway, on October 23, and a week later at Krivolak, still pushing north, came into collision with a Bulgarian force which General Teodoroff had launched against them from Istib. The Bulgarian attack was unsuccessful, and the French under General Sarraill marched on to Grodsko, farther north along the railway, where the River Cerna falls into the Vardar. The French thus held the whole of



Map illustrating the Evacuation of Serbia, October–December, 1915

good money after bad to send troops for Serbia's aid in the face of the defection of Greece. But, on October 12, General Joffre came over to London, and in an electrically charged hour's interview changed their resolve.

the railway from the Greek frontier to Grodsko, and tried to improve their position still further. They had two goals. One was Veles. The other was to hold out a hand to the Serbians who had been obliged to retreat from

Uskub under Bulgarian pressure, and who were now occupying a strong position on the Babuna heights outside Uskub, and barring the Bulgarian path to Monastir. If General Sarrail could get in touch with their army he could bring it with him to the shelter of the Vardar Valley, and so to a safe retreat. He crossed the Cerna River

increasing resistance to the French advance (and eventually threaten it with outflanking), while elaborating his efforts to bar the path of the retreating Serbians to the south and west. Mackensen could also send on the extreme western force, which hitherto had had so little fighting to do, to close up the way out while the Serbians



The Tragedy of the Great Retreat: the veteran King Peter of Serbia on the road to exile, on an ammunition-wagon drawn by oxen

on November 5, and tried to get farther north. But his forces were too weak: the forces accumulating against him were continually growing stronger.

Holding the whole of northern Serbia firmly, Mackensen could now develop the second part of his plans, which was not the occupation of territory but the capture of the Serbian army. He was now able to detach part of General Bodajeff's First Bulgarian Army and send it to the aid of Teodoroff, who could thus oppose an

were still fighting. Nothing prevented the successful accomplishment of all these intentions but the fighting ability of the Serbians, which even in a retreat, when harassment, hunger, and loss of guns were all against them, never showed any signs of diminution or eclipse. Outside Uskub on the Babuna Ridge they fought the most desperate battle for three days (November 4, 5, and 6) against the Bulgarians, in the hope of holding out till General Sarrail could reach them. The Serbians under

Colonel Vassitch's command held out against a force three times their strength, repulsing all the Bulgarian frontal attacks, and then descending from their fortified positions, driving their hereditary foes through Izvor to Veles. It was valour in vain, for after the set-back the Bulgarians awaited reinforcements. The French were not able to advance north of the Cerna River in face of the growing numbers of the enemy between them and Uskub, and other Bulgarians marched south of the ridge to Prilep and so turned it. There was nothing for Colonel Vassitch and the Serbians to do but to retreat as best they could westwards.

The northern armies were now coming down fast. They reached Prishtina on a broad front, pushing the Serbians ever southwards and westwards, on November 28; and the Austrian advance through Novi Bazar reached Mitrovitza, the terminus of the northern railway from Uskub, on November 24. That was all but the end. There was an advancing Austro-German-Bulgarian line pressing irresistibly from the north. General Teodoroff had been instructed to send out another eastward-moving column towards Tetovo, east of Uskub, where the road south to Monastir leaves the mountains, and so to bar the Serbian retreat that way. Thus his bar against the Serbians extended from Tetovo to Katchanik, and his bar against the French from Prilep to Grodsko and Strumnitza. The French, attempting to break it, came against the Mount Archangel positions, were held up by them, and had no other course than to recoil from them.

There was some wild talk about the Serbians making a last stand in the historic plain of Kossovo; but there could never have been any such foolish intention of completing by suicide the work which the Austrians and Bulgarians had begun by assassination. They had been all but surrounded by 700,000 against 200,000. The sides of the trap had almost closed on them, as in Edgar Allan Poe's story the walls of the room closed on the victim, but the western wall had not shut down either fast or far enough. There was a way open to the west; and thanks to the mountainous country of Serbia, and the absence of good roads, the Serbians were able to make use of this way out, in spite of the efforts of their enemies. The Serbian Government, which had moved successively from Nish to Mitrovitza and to Prisrend, left Prisrend (captured by Bulgarians sent from Bodajeff's army on November 29) for Scutari, and the Serbian armies and part of the Serbian people followed them in a march the privations of which, and the way they were endured, will be one of the stories of history. From Prisrend the Bulgarians followed the retreat to Dibra and Djakova. Another column of mixed Austrian, German, and Bulgarian troops advanced on Monastir, which was occupied by them on December 5. The Western Austrian Army, which had got down too late to intercept the retreat of the Serbians, followed them in pursuit through Prijpolje (November 23), on the way to Plevje and Montenegro, crossing the Montenegrin frontier on December 1, and reaching Plevje (December 2),





Drawn by Christopher Clark

With the Allies on the Serbian Frontier: British troops passing through Strumnitza in October, 1915

and Ipek on December 7. The Serbian army thus disappeared from Serbia. It had lost many men in the retreat—killed, wounded, and prisoners—and in the mountains of Albania it was exposed to Albanian guerrillas and

to the greater enemy of starvation. That it reached Scutari with so great a proportion of its numbers unconquered was the greatest proof that the nation and its soldiers were unconquerable. The army had lost its guns and its equipment. That it had lost the 100,000 prisoners which in a *communiqué* from German Main Headquarters it was asserted that the Germans had captured was not true; such

the signal for a retreat which was no less brilliant for being an enforced retirement. General Sarraill, perceiving that the Bulgarians were being reinforced from the north, and that the Serbian retreat had left him "in the air" in a position which could not be permanently held with the forces he had, began to make preparations to remove not merely his army but the stores and munitions which had been



Saving the Guns in Serbia: Heavy artillery disguised to deceive hostile air-craft and drawn by oxen

a total could only have been arrived at by counting in the Serbian civilians who had fallen into German hands.

General Sarraill's relief expedition, its objective now removed, had to make the best of its way out of the dangerous position into which it had so courageously advanced. It had got as near Uskub as the Mount Archangel positions, and it held on there for a perilously long time. It was fiercely assailed by the Bulgarians on November 27, but the attack cost the Bulgarians 4000 killed and wounded, and was repulsed. It was, however,

collected in the Cerna-Vardar salient in the hope that they might be used for an advance. He deceived the enemy with regard to his intentions very cleverly, by making local attacks up to the last moment. These attacks, while inducing the Bulgarians to believe in his intention to advance, were mere demonstrations intended to cover the working parties removing his stores. On December 5—the same date as that of the occupation of Monastir—he had got the bulk of his stores away and began to withdraw his men.

E. S. G.









FROM A PHOTOGRAPH

BY REGINALD HANES

*Admiral Lord Fisher of Kilverstone. G.C.B., C.M.*





## CHAPTER XI

## THE AUTUMN OFFENSIVE OF 1915—SECOND PHASE

(September 26—October 1, 1915)

Moral Effects of the Battle—Dogged Defence of the London Territorials—15th (Scottish) Division holds on to Hill 70—Arrival of Reinforcements—Ordeal of the 21st and 24th Divisions—Critical Moments on September 26—Heroes and Honours of the Fight—How Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas-Hamilton won the V.C.—Private Dunsire's Gallantry—German Cunning—1st Division's Resumed Advance on Hulluch—German Counter-attack—The Grim Struggle on the 26th—Quarries lost and won again—Sir Thompson Capper's Death—Fosse 8 and the Hohenzollern Redoubt—Lord Kitchener's Congratulations—Germans regain Ground at Fosse 8—Death of Major-General Thesiger—The Prolonged Battle round the Hohenzollern—The Guards in Action near Loos—Lord Cavan's Order—A Battle Picture in Real Life—Achievements of the Guards at Hill 70 and the Chalk-pit—Struggle for Puits 14 *bis*—Welsh Guards' Baptism of Fire—Captain Williams's Death—The Cavalry Brigade at Loos—Heavy Losses of the Guards—The Restored Line round Loos—Arrival of the 9th French Corps—Back to the Hohenzollern—More V.C.'s and other Awards—Our Total Casualties—Special Order to the Troops—The King's Message—Operations of French Troops under Foch and D'Urbal—The Capture of Souchez—Fighting for the Vimy Heights.

THE story of the battle of Loos has been well described as one glowing epic of the heroism of the British army. Its initial advance on September 25, 1915, after the long summer stalemate of the trenches, even though it had not torn a rent right through the last German lines, had filled it with a new hope, and endorsed its belief in its increasing superiority over its foe. A battle-field, in spite of all its horrors, is said more than anything else to revive one's faith in human nature; and this is not such a paradox as it sounds. "War shows up men at their best," wrote one of the officers a few days after the battle of Loos. "It is simply amazing how thoughtful of each other the men are, and how careless of themselves." The work of rescue at Loos went on uninterruptedly throughout the din of battle. The bravery and devotion of the stretcher-bearers and the officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps were the subject of unstinted praise;

but more heroic still was the conduct of the wounded, helping each other to crawl in under heavy fire, and bearing their sufferings with a cheerfulness almost beyond belief. In the captured trenches and shattered strongholds of the Germans the scenes were too horrible for words. "I shall never forget those mangled dead, nor the smell of powder, gas, and blood," wrote one of the Londoners who shared in the fight.

Yet the British army was never in better spirits than on the night of September 25, 1915. Not that it had any illusions regarding the might and efficiency of the German fighting-machine. It knew that it was a hard nut to crack, but it meant to crack it. Similarly the German Head-quarters Staff was determined, if possible, to recapture the lost ground and hurl our troops back from their threatening points of vantage. By their stubborn defence of their redoubts they had gained time, as we have already shown, to bring up

reinforcements at the critical moment on the 25th, and now, with the arrival of Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria's general reserves, the terrific combat raged practically without cessation for three days and nights down the whole of the new line from west of the Hohenzollern Redoubt in the north to below Hill 70 and Loos in the south.

carnage, and called on to repel heavy counter-attacks along most of our new front. The London Territorials of the 47th Division, who had so gallantly won all their objectives within the first few hours of the battle on the 25th, were less disturbed than most, though kept constantly on the qui vive while efficiently fulfilling their function of



The Stricken Field: on the road to Loos

(Official photograph taken immediately after the great attack. Crown copyright reserved)

In a battle so protracted and so confused it is better for the sake of clearness to deal with it day by day, not as one grand battle, but as a series of episodes, in certain cases complete in themselves, like the fight for Hill 70 and the achievements of the Guards, the struggle for the Quarries and the Hulluch road, and the desperate battle for Fosse 8 and the Hohenzollern Redoubt. The cold, damp night of September 25-26 was a bitter trial to troops who had been fighting all day, surrounded by ghastly evidence of the

protecting the right flank of the 4th Corps until the French on their right should remove the danger of a gap in our line. Here, in the captured German trenches and the southern suburbs of Loos, the 47th remained for four days, getting very irregular rations and little sleep, but holding their own and adding here and there to their gains until finally relieved by French troops and rewarded with a short but well-earned rest.

Some of their splendid deeds in the initial attack were recorded in Chapter

IX, but further mention must now be made of one or two outstanding acts in the noble work of rescuing the wounded. Although himself wounded on the first day, when carrying in another wounded man, Private C. H. J. Stewart, of the 20th London Regiment (Blackheath and Woolwich), refused to retire, continuing his duties during the four following days in spite of his wound, and "exhibiting", states the *Gazette*, "a gallantry and devotion to duty beyond praise". Sergeant W. Etches, of the 47th London Division Engineers (Territorials), was wounded in six places by shell fragments, but continued his work as a stretcher-bearer with unshaken fortitude and coolness, even when others performing similar duties had been forced to retire. Both men received the D.C.M. One of the D.S.O.'s fell to Major J. W. Bird, of the 6th London Field Ambulance, who set an inspiring example throughout the operations between the 25th and 30th, on one occasion working for twenty-three hours without cessation in dressing and tending the wounded. Nor must we overlook the plucky drummer of the 23rd London Regiment—M. O. Watson—who won the D.C.M. for devotion to duty and total disregard of personal danger on September 25–26, when he not only carried in several wounded men of different regiments under heavy fire, but also dressed the wounds of a large number of them, no medical officer being present at the time.

On the left of the London Territorials the 15th Division—the Scottish Division of the Second New Army, which had swept over and beyond

Hill 70 in their impetuous charge of the preceding day to the very outskirts of Lens—had held the rest of Loos and yielded no ground since they dug themselves in on the western slopes of Hill 70, after their premature advance on Cité St. Auguste. Here they clung with grand endurance for the remainder of that terrific day, waiting for the reinforcements which, though reported by Sir John French to have arrived within 3 miles of our original trench lines by 11.30 a.m., do not appear to have reached the fighting-line at Hill 70 until nearly midnight. These were the advance troops of the 21st and 24th Divisions, placed by the Field-Marshal at 9.30 a.m. on the 25th at the disposal of Sir Douglas Haig, who, as already stated, at once ordered the General Officer commanding the 11th Corps (General Haking) to move them up in support of the advanced troops—a distance of some 8 or 9 miles from their original starting-point. It is difficult to follow the fortunes of these new and untried battalions, but undoubtedly they found the going appallingly heavy, especially on the rain-sodden battle-field in the maze of shattered and encumbered German trenches. Stories are told to the effect that they were thrown into the battle unfed and already exhausted, but since the whole matter, as Lord Crewe stated in the House of Lords, is the subject of a War Office enquiry, we must await the official report before commenting on the causes and results of this delay. "Reports regarding this portion of the action are very conflicting," writes Sir John French in his despatch of October 15, 1915, "and it

is not possible to form an entirely just appreciation of what occurred in this part of the field."

It is clear, however, that the enemy had now sufficiently recovered to launch very strong counter-attacks before our reinforced troops could resume the offensive. The advanced brigades of the 21st and 24th Divisions were actually moving forward to the attack, both on Hulluch and on the redoubt on the east side of Hill 70, when Prince Rupprecht's fresh reserves were launched to the assault from that direction. Our new troops were driven in, but not before the massive German offensive had itself been broken. At nightfall on Sunday, the 26th, reported Sir John French, there was no change in our newly won position up to Hill 70, save for a small gain of ground south of Loos.

"From Hill 70 the line bent sharply back to the north-west as far as Loos-La Bassée road, which it followed for a thousand yards, bearing thence north-eastward to near the west end of Hulluch. Thence northward it was the same as it had been on the previous night."

That day the 6th Cavalry Brigade, dismounted, was thrown into Loos to form a garrison, while the Scotsmen of the 15th Division held the hard-pressed line at Hill 70 against the ponderous weight of the German counter-attacks. There were many critical moments in the course of this confused and furious fighting on the 26th. It was largely due to the cool courage of Captain Arthur P. Sayer, of the 91st Field Company, Royal Engineers, who was rewarded with the D.S.O., that a vital part of the ground

was held at Hill 70. Rallying men of various units who were retiring under the merciless storm of machine-gun and shell fire, he led them up the hill again and held on. Later in the day he collected stragglers to fill the old German trenches, and continued to do this until he was overcome with gas. The 9th Battalion of the Suffolks fought magnificently in one of the most exposed forward positions in the fierce struggle round Loos, winning no fewer than three Military Crosses and three D.C.M.'s. One of the first was gained by Captain Charles T. Packard, who, rallying a platoon after serious losses, led them back to their original position, and, when the retirement was ordered, remained to help a wounded man, bringing him 400 yards under heavy fire. Captain G. B. Steward won the same decoration for similar gallantry, advancing through a hurricane of shot and shell to save a wounded sergeant who was unable to move. Another sergeant of the same battalion—R. C. Bolingbroke—went out to assist him, and so earned the D.C.M., also won by Private C. Hales, who went back for a wounded comrade, and after carrying him to a place of safety rejoined his platoon; and by Private W. J. Mann for bravery in carrying urgent messages over open ground. Lieutenant C. F. Beyts, also of the 9th Suffolks, won his Military Cross for occupying the forward position with a Lewis gun, which had been abandoned, and covering the retirement of another company after it had been ordered to withdraw.

A true idea of the desperate and disorganized nature of much of the



fighting during the fierce attacks and counter-attacks of September 26. can only be gleaned from these and other deeds recorded in the honours lists subsequently published. Lieutenant A. B. Hatt, 8th Somerset Light Infantry, who received the Military Cross, held on to his position on

firing-line. Major S. J. Lowe, of the Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment), also won the D.S.O. for similar valour on both days, and Second-Lieutenant E. R. Nott, 9th King's Own (Yorkshire Light Infantry), the Military Cross, for his bravery and determination in continuing to ad-



Effects of the British Bombardment: one of the shattered German trenches

(Official photograph Crown copyright reserved)

Hill 70 with a sergeant and about six men until practically everyone else in the vicinity had retired. Major A. C. Gordon, 16th (Territorial) County of London Battery, Royal Field Artillery, who had distinguished himself in a daring reconnaissance on the previous day by capturing twelve Germans, after shooting one man with a revolver, doubly earned his D.S.O. on the 26th by reorganizing men who had become detached, and taking them back to the

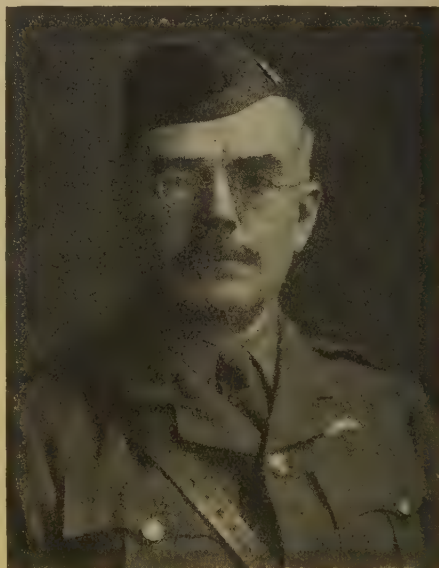
vance, although twice wounded, leading and encouraging his men throughout. Lance-Corporal M'Kelvey, also of the 9th King's Own, gave an equally fine exhibition of leadership in this action on the northern slopes of the Hill, although twice wounded, and only desisting on being wounded a third time. Close by another superb example of total disregard of danger was given by Corporal G. Stubbs, of the 10th Yorkshire Regiment, especially in con-

veying messages across the danger zone, in which dangerous work Private Hemsworth of the 12th Northumberland Fusiliers also distinguished himself. Another Private of the 12th Northumberland Fusiliers had remained at his machine-gun on Hill 70 all night under furious and continuous fire, "doing excellent work", adds the *Gazette*, "after his comrades on either side of him had been killed". All the men mentioned were rewarded with the D.C.M.

When other troops on Hill 70 had been forced to withdraw during the night of September 25-26, Second-Lieutenant L. C. Paton, of the 10th Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), still clung to his section of the enemy's work with invincible devotion. "Although his arm was broken and he had a gunshot wound in his thigh", states the *Gazette*, in recording his award of the Military Cross, "he remained at his duty until ordered to retire." After all the officers of one company of the same battalion had been killed or wounded, Sergeant H. Dixon assumed command and won the D.C.M. for the high courage and ability which he displayed in leading his men, until he, too, fell severely wounded.

One important post near Loos, vital to the safety of our front line, was held all day by Second-Lieutenant N. H. MacNeil, 12th Highland Light Infantry, with a mere handful of men, against repeated counter-attacks. After being relieved, this gallant officer, who received the Military Cross, returned several times in order to rally men of other units. One of the sergeants of

the same battalion earned the D.C.M. for refusing, although under very heavy shell-fire, to leave a wounded officer, whom he finally brought into safety. "He performed this action in the face of a rapid counter-attack by the enemy, and without his assistance the officer must have been captured."



Lieutenant-Colonel Angus F. Douglas-Hamilton, who won the V.C. and lost his life while commanding the 6th Cameron Highlanders on Hill 70  
(From a photograph by Elliott & Fry)

To the Scotsmen fell the two chief honours of that second day of the battle. Lieutenant-Colonel Angus F. Douglas-Hamilton, one of the Victoria Cross heroes of Hill 70, commanded the 6th Cameron Highlanders throughout the operations until killed at their head—all that remained of them at least—in his last heroic charge against the on-coming Germans. When the battalions on his right and left had retired, he rallied the Camerons again and again,

leading them forward four times, until not more than some fifty men remained. "It was mainly due to his bravery, untiring energy, and splendid leadership", states the *Gazette*, "that the line at this point was enabled to check the enemy's advance." Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas-Hamilton was a veteran of fifty-one, the youngest son of Major-General Octavius Douglas-Hamilton, and had seen much active service with the Camerons before joining the Reserve of Officers in 1911. Another of the 6th Camerons, Second-Lieutenant J. Wilson, won the Military Cross on the same day for most conspicuous bravery. Collecting and rallying stragglers on Hill 70, he led them through the troops of another division who were retiring, and remained with them in the most advanced position during the night.

The second V.C. for Hill 70 on September 26 was earned by Private Robert Dunsire, 13th Royal Scots (Lothian Regiment), who went out, regardless of the galling fire which swept those death-strewn slopes, and rescued a wounded man from between the lines. When another man considerably nearer the German positions was heard shouting for help, he crawled out yet again and carried him in also—shortly before the Germans attacked over that very ground. Private Dunsire, unhappily, did not long survive his well-merited reward, news of his death from wounds received in action being received a few months later. The 13th Royal Scots, like the 6th Camerons, stood their ground on Hill 70 to the last. One of their officers, Second-Lieutenant

Alexander Linton, who was rewarded with the Military Cross, repeatedly rallied his men and held on to his position, until only a few remained, till midnight, when practically everyone else had withdrawn. Two non-commissioned officers of the 13th Royal Scots also received the D.C.M. for helping in the work of rescue, as well as for displaying great courage throughout the engagement—Sergeant F. M'Alear, who set a fine example of coolness and fearlessness under the most trying circumstances during the occupation of the trench under Hill 70, which had previously been abandoned; and Lance-Corporal G. M'Evoy, who rescued a wounded officer of the East Yorkshire Regiment.

Part of the confusion and disorganization was due to the cunning of the Germans, who apparently succeeded in delivering to officers of certain units false orders to retire. It was no new trick on the enemy's part to send in messengers disguised in British uniforms, and New Army troops with little practical experience of their methods were less likely to be on their guard. One of their more experienced officers, Major W. W. MacGregor, attached to the 9th (Pioneer) Battalion Gordon Highlanders from the Reserve of Officers, after receiving one of these orders to retire, and withdrawing to the German front-line trenches before Loos, was shrewd enough to doubt and discredit the authenticity of the instructions. Although large numbers of men were retiring, he called on two companies, led them back through Loos, now under heavy shell-fire from the enemy, and reoccupied his defen-



sive position. Holding on with these troops from 5 to 8 p.m., he then received reinforcements, which enabled him to remain in position all night. Major MacGregor's prompt action, for which he was decorated with the D.S.O., helped at a critical moment to prevent the Germans from turning our flank.

Columns could be filled with other tales of heroism and sacrifice in this Sunday struggle for the dearly-won line round Loos, but one or two further instances must suffice. In the worst part of the confusion Private T. Allan, of the 10th Gordon Highlanders, who had been continuously carrying messages and bringing up ammunition under incessant fire for twenty-four hours, led a large party of scattered men through Loos to the Hill, and later carried a wounded officer back to Loos over the same shell-swept zone. His fine initiative was duly recognized by the award of the D.C.M., also conferred upon Sergeant G. T. Willstop, of the 7th Royal Scots Fusiliers, who, when all his officers had been killed or wounded near Loos, took command of his company, and by his cool bravery contributed greatly to the steadiness of all ranks.

While this precarious line was alternately breaking and mending on the 26th, but keeping the enemy back from his lost stronghold at Loos for all his incessant storming and battering, the left wing of the 4th Corps—the 1st Division—was as heavily engaged in its resumed advance on Hulluch, coming to grips with the enemy in his own counter-attack, with the result that neither side made any

appreciable headway. That evening, however, the 7th Division of the 1st Corps, on the left of the 1st Division, retook the Quarries north-west of Hulluch, which, after being so brilliantly captured early on the previous day, had been lost again. It is difficult to disentangle all the scattered facts relating to the operations of these two divisions on September 26 and piece them together into any semblance of a connected narrative. As on the opening day, the losses were appalling on both sides. How magnificently the Royal Army Medical Corps rose to the occasion may be read in the records of the *London Gazette*. Captain F. P. Freeman, attached to the 23rd Field Ambulance, who received the Military Cross, brought in and attended to the wounded during four consecutive days and nights, going out repeatedly under heavy fire. "He set a splendid example to his men", adds the *Gazette*, some confirmation of which will be found in another issue in the story of how Private J. Holmes, attached to the same field-ambulance from the Army Service Corps, won the D.C.M. on September 26 while driving a motor ambulance up to bring in some of the wounded.

"Although he was fired upon by the enemy, he drove the car in the reverse for 400 yards, the man beside him having been killed, till a bullet struck the carburettor. He then came up with another car, and towed his own away safely. His car was hit twenty-two times, and, but for his great bravery and resource, must have been wrecked."

The 21st Field Ambulance simi-





Drawn by Ralph Cleaver

Consolidating a captured German Trench after the Great Attack: British infantry at work near Hulluch

larly distinguished itself, Captain C. J. O'Reilly receiving the Military Cross, and Quartermaster-Sergeant Halford the D.C.M., for bringing in and attending to the wounded without rest, under heavy shell-fire, for four days and nights on end.<sup>1</sup> One of the regimental bearers of the 1st Royal Welsh Fusiliers—Private F. Pearce, who also received the D.C.M.—worked like a Trojan throughout the same trying period, bringing in wounded men day and night, carrying many of them on his back. The Welsh Fusiliers had done nobly in the initial advance—thanks in no small measure to the grit and determination of Captain E. R. Kearsley, who won the D.S.O. for his personal good leading until finally disabled by no fewer than seven wounds—and suffered heavily in the hostile counter-attacks. Regimental Sergeant-Major Bluck played a hero's part in holding the line during the critical night of the 25th–26th, rallying considerable numbers of disorganized men, issuing fresh ammunition to them, and sending them back. While collecting these parties to resist another counter-attack near Hulluch, Sergeant-Major Bluck, who received the Military Cross for good work throughout the action, was himself wounded.

The 8th Buffs (East Kent Regiment), 8th Royal West Kents, 8th Royal West Surreys, and 9th East Surreys all shared the honours as well as the heavy losses of the furious fighting near Hulluch on the 26th. When the advance was forced

back by the overwhelming counter-attack of the reinforced Germans, and all his senior officers had become casualties, Second-Lieutenant James Vaughan, of the Buffs, who received the Military Cross, took command of his battalion, and brought the remnants out of action safely and in good order. The West Kents fought and died through the same ordeal—their losses that day including their commanding officer, Colonel Eden Vansittart—withdrawing at length under heavy machine-gun fire from the enemy at close range. Major A. H. Pullman, who was attached to the 8th Battalion from the Reserve of Officers, earned the D.S.O. for the conspicuous skill and gallantry with which he commanded his company during the retirement, when, although himself wounded, he collected men to cover the movement until it was completed. Lieutenant W. K. Tillie, of the same battalion, won the Military Cross “for great bravery” throughout the day.

“He handled his machine-guns”, says the *Gazette*, “with great skill, and continued to serve one of them single-handed, after all the team had become casualties, until his ammunition was exhausted. He brought this gun back himself. Finally, when all the other officers of his battalion had become casualties, he showed great courage and resource, and brought the battalion out of action in good order.”

Another fine example of the way in which these New Army troops from Kent and Surrey could fight was given by Sergeant A. W. Powell, of the 8th Royal West Surreys, who received the D.C.M. He was in charge of one of the machine-guns, and in the thick of

<sup>1</sup> Other officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps to win the Military Cross in this stricken area were Captain Thomas Walker and Captain James Ronald M'Curdie, both of No. 2 Field Ambulance, and Lieutenant J. B. Baird, No. 1 Field Ambulance.

the fight, when the enemy's quick-firers were playing havoc with our ranks, he sat up on the parapet in order to bring his own fire to bear on them. At another time, it is officially recorded, he lay out in the open, under a very heavy fire, so as to form a rest for his machine-gun. After that the



Major-General Sir Thompson Capper, commanding the 7th Division, killed in the recapture of the Quarries on September 26, 1915

(From a photograph by Histed)

*Gazette's* additional comment that Sergeant Powell's devotion to duty on September 26 "was most marked" seems almost superfluous.<sup>1</sup>

Not far distant, near the Quarries, some of the 2nd Battalion of the same historic regiment, the Royal West

Surreys, were at the same time ensuring the success of another regiment in the renewed attack of the 7th Division, Corporal W. J. Brown winning the D.C.M. for leading their party of bombers down a German communication-trench and driving the enemy back. The bombers of the 2nd Surreys and 2nd Worcesters played a leading part in the bloody triumph of the 26th, when the Quarries, which had been lost in the German counter-attacks during the night, were re-won by the 7th Division. One of the finest deeds of the day in this part of the battlefield was the act which earned the Military Cross for Lieutenant A. F. Logan, attached from the Indian Army to the 2nd Bedfordshire Regiment. After guiding the battalion to its position in the firing-line, during this attack on the Quarries, Lieutenant Logan, returning by a communication-trench, heard the cry for help of a wounded man, who was lying in the open with the Germans still firing at him. The officer at once jumped over the parapet and strove to pull him in, but while doing so was himself severely wounded in three or four places. The fresh attack of the 7th Division in the afternoon of the 26th had readjusted the situation in the Quarries, and the repeated attempts of the enemy again to turn the tables that evening were crushed with severe loss.

This renewed success of the 7th Division, however, was dearly won at the cost of the life of its commanding officer, Major-General Sir Thompson Capper, whose brilliant share in the Allies' victory in the Second Battle of Ypres was referred to on p. 218. He

<sup>1</sup> Captain D. P. O'Connor, 9th East Surrey Regiment, won the Military Cross in the same frustrated attack, "when, although wounded," to quote from the *Gazette*, "he continued to advance, and carry out his duties as adjutant until overcome by weakness caused by his wounds".



was severely wounded on the 26th, and died on the following morning. One of the most distinguished and promising of the younger generals of the British army, as well as one of the bravest of the brave, Sir Thompson Capper was a leader whom we could ill afford to lose. The enemy, in no mood to abandon a point of such strategic value, gave the British no rest day or night. One of the Military Crosses earned on the following day fell to Second-Lieutenant Lionel E. Hall, 1st King's Royal Rifle Corps, who led his bombers and threw bombs himself against the Germans at the Quarries for nearly three hours, until completely exhausted. "By his courage and example he eventually worked his way up the trench and cleared it of the enemy."

All this while, away to the northwest, the fight was raging with concentrated fury round Fosse 8 and the Hohenzollern Redoubt, where the Scottish Division of the First Hundred Thousand was still tackling the most formidable task of all. The 7th Seaforths, who, as mentioned in Chapter IX, had greatly distinguished themselves in the initial attack on the 25th, fought through the rain and the counter-attacks of the enemy with a steadfast courage to which mere words can do little justice. Lieutenant G. H. W. Green, who received the Military Cross, set a splendid example throughout the struggle from the 25th to the 27th, when in command first of his platoon and later of his company, exposing himself with absolute fearlessness while organizing and leading attacks. Private J. W. Campbell also

gave what the unemotional *Gazette* went so far as to describe as "a perfect example of coolness and devotion to duty under very heavy fire", rallying the line when several disorganized units became mixed up with his own men. Later, he mounted the parapet, and, calling to the men to stand firm in the midst of a terrific attack, contributed largely to the steadiness of all ranks. He was rewarded with the D.C.M., also conferred upon Sergeant T. Dundas, who, when the same battalion was being relieved, saw a party of another regiment in difficulties, and taking some men back bombed the Germans out of the trench under heavy fire. It was during the same crisis that Lieutenant C. S. Woolner of the 64th Field Company Royal Engineers, won the Military Cross in the following circumstances:—

"Some new troops holding a corner of Fosse 8 were shaken by heavy shell-fire, and, believing that the enemy was holding the Slag Heap in their rear, were on the point of retiring when Lieutenant Woolner rallied them, and, collecting two sections of his own company, charged to the top of the Slag Heap and restored confidence. A retirement at this point would have been serious."

The stern struggle round this vital sector produced little change throughout the 26th, the new British line at the end of the second day of battle being practically the same as on the previous night.

It was to mark the attainment of this definite stage in the great battle that Lord Kitchener, next day, sent the following encouraging message to Sir John French:—



"My warmest congratulations to you, and all serving under you, on the substantial success you have achieved, and my best wishes for the progress of your important operations."

The night of the 26th-27th brought no rest to our sorely-tried troops, "for many counter-attacks were made", records the Field-Marshal Command-



Major-General G. H. Thesiger, commanding the 9th Division, killed on September 27, 1915  
(From a photograph by Russell & Sons)

ing-in-Chief, "and constant pressure was maintained by the enemy". Dawn on September 27 revealed the ugly fact that we could not maintain our perilous hold on Fosse 8, formidably backed as the Germans at this point were by the strong defences and guns of Auchy. The brigade which had held the position so stubbornly against the havoc of the German shells and bombs and the ceaseless pressure of constant reinforcements of the enemy had accordingly to withdraw,

fighting foot by foot, until at length our front at this point coincided with the eastern portion of the Hohenzollern Redoubt. The chief tragedy of the retirement was the death of Major-General Thesiger, commanding the 9th Division, who, in the words of Sir John French, "was killed while most gallantly endeavouring to secure the ground which had been won". The elder son of the late Lieutenant-General the Hon. C. Wemyss Thesiger, and grandson of the first Lord Chelmsford, he had fought with the Rifle Brigade in the Nile Expedition of 1898, serving under Lord Kitchener at the battle of Khartoum, and was also one of the heroes of the defence of Ladysmith in the South African War, when he was severely wounded.

In the midst of the awful clatter and confusion of the conflict in which Major-General Thesiger lost his life, with the besom of the enemy's artillery sweeping the British troops with relentless precision, and the air thick with bombs from the oncoming Germans, one of the 5th Cameron Highlanders joined the increasing ranks of the V.C.'s with an amazing exhibition of supreme courage. The hero of this occasion was Corporal James Pollock, who, when the enemy's bombers in superior numbers were overrunning Fosse 8, and successfully working up the Little Willie Trench to push us out of the redoubt, sought and obtained permission to climb out of the trench alone and attack them along the top edge. This he did with the utmost coolness and disregard of danger, walking along the top, and compelling the German

bombers to retire by bombing them from above. "He was under heavy machine-gun fire the whole time, but continued to hold up the progress of the Germans for an hour, when he was at length wounded." It was during this desperate struggle, lasting unremittently since the 25th, that Lieutenant D. C. Alexander, Royal Army Medical Corps, who was at-

Fosse 8, he took command of his company and led it with exceptional bravery until himself seriously wounded in the head. This, too, after having been wounded in the first attack, when he refused to retire. Private T. May, of the same battalion, and Corporal G. Flockhart, of the 8th Gordons, both of whom, like Sergeant Smellie, received the D.C.M., set a splendid



Undestroyed Wire Entanglements before the German Trenches: immediately after the British advance at Loos on September 25, 1915

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tached to the same battalion, won the Military Cross for his fearless devotion in attending to wounded men who were lying in the open under heavy enfilade fire, and getting many of them into shelter.

The 8th Royal Highlanders, 8th Gordons, and 12th Royal Scots (Lothian Regiment) were among those undaunted troops who fought on in the face of indescribable horrors. It is recorded of Sergeant J. Smellie, of the first-named battalion, that, when all his officers had been killed or wounded in the operations round

example throughout the same fluctuating fight, finally, in the crisis of the 27th, carrying sorely-needed bombs and ammunition to the redoubt under the terrific shell-fire. Major J. Huntly Dutton, of the 12th Royal Scots, won the D.S.O. "for conspicuous gallantry, resource, and determination" while commanding his battalion throughout the operations at this point from the 26th to the 28th, repeatedly organizing the defence of his line against German counter-attacks, and maintaining his position until relieved.

Some of the neighbouring English

regiments shared in the honours for Fosse 8 and the Hohenzollern Redoubt on the 27th, as well as the perils of the Scottish positions. Lieutenant E. T. H. Godwin, 9th Royal Sussex Regiment, who received the Military Cross, worked his machine-guns at Fosse 8 until both of them had been put out of action, when he directed the fire of the machine-gun of another regiment against the flank of the enemy's counter-attack. Here, too, Lance-Sergeant Dennett, of the same battalion, earned the D.C.M., finding some German bombs in the nick of time, and, though without any training in the use of such weapons, employing them with the utmost coolness and bravery, so that for the time he succeeded in effectually checking one of the German enfilading-parties.

West of Fosse 8 some of the 13th Middlesex greatly distinguished themselves during this critical period, Private J. W. Cooper in particular going out under a galling fire and bringing in wounded men of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders—Ian Hay's heroes of *The First Hundred Thousand*—until he was himself seriously wounded; while Company Sergeant-Major Llewellyn continued to carry ammunition to the firing-line across the danger zone; even after he was wounded. Both men received the Distinguished Conduct Medal.<sup>1</sup>

While we were thus losing ground

round the Hohenzollern Redoubt, on this third day of continuous fighting—Monday, March 27—the Guards, at the other end of the British battle-field, were winning back most of the ground temporarily lost round Loos, and inscribing a new page of glory in their historic annals. The Guards had grown from a brigade to a complete divisional unit since bidding farewell, on August 19, 1915, to the war-worn 2nd Division, whose fortunes they had shared through all the crises of the campaign, from Mons and Le Cateau to the Marne and the Aisne, and thence through the first battle of Ypres and the later struggles at Cuinchy and Festubert. Now rested, and fully trained as a complete division in themselves, the third day of the battle of Loos gave them their first opportunity of displaying their hereditary prowess in their new formation. The exhibition will live in the minds of all the troops who were privileged to witness it, including the London Territorials and the Scotsmen of the Second New Army, as the finest battle-picture they had ever seen. As explained in our narrative of the opening day's battle, Sir John French had held these picked troops—the flower of the British army—in reserve on the 25th, placing them at Sir Douglas Haig's disposal on the following morning (Sunday), the 28th Division having been meantime ordered

<sup>1</sup> One isolated deed of daring in another part of the battle-field calls for mention, though difficult to link up with the main thread of our narrative. One of the Territorials at Cuinchy—Corporal Alfred A. Burt, of the 1st Hertford Regiment—won the Victoria Cross on the 27th while his company was lining the front trench preparatory to an attack. Suddenly a large minenwerfer bomb fell in their midst, and Corporal Burt, who well knew the de-

structive power of these weapons, might easily have reached safety behind a traverse. But he immediately went forward, put his foot on the fuse, wrenched it out of the bomb, and threw it over the parapet, thus rendering the bomb innocuous. "His presence of mind and great pluck", as the *Gazette* states, "undoubtedly saved the lives of others."





After the Capture of Loos: one of the ruined streets, looking towards the "Crystal Palace"

(Official photograph taken by permission of the Commander-in-Chief, and passed by the Chief Field Censor for publication. Crown copyright reserved.)

down from Bailleul and placed at Sir Douglas Haig's disposal at the same time. Before the battle the gallant commander of the Guards, Lord Cavan, had issued the following order to his troops:—

"Division Command of the  
Guards Division.

"On the eve of the greatest battle of all times the Commander of the Guard Division wishes his troops much luck. He has nothing to add to the animating words of the Commanding General as given out this morning, but wishes his men to keep two things well before their mind—first, that upon the result of this battle the fate of the coming generation of Englishmen depends; second, that the greatest things are expected of the Guard Division. From his thirty years' acquaintance of the Guard he knows that he need say no more.

"(Signed) LORD CAVAN."

The position round Loos, after the failure of the new 21st and 24th Divisions to push the enemy off Hill 70, and advance on Hulluch, on the Sunday afternoon, was becoming increasingly critical. When Monday morning came the Guards were occupying some of the first-line German trenches captured on the Saturday, extending from Loos in the direction of Hulluch, and at 4 o'clock that afternoon they were ordered to attack. The Londoners, still holding the right flank of the battle-field, and dodging shells and bullets all day, enjoyed the unforgettable view of their initial advance, extending over about three-quarters of a mile, and completely in the open, in artillery formation. It was like an autumn manœuvre scene on Salisbury



Plain. How the Londoners cheered as they passed in front of them, moving as one man! "Can you imagine the ordinary battle-pictures of troops advancing under hell's own fire?" wrote one of these eye-witnesses, in a letter home.<sup>1</sup> "I thought such a thing was impossible. Now I not only know it's true, but saw it all." Everyone who witnessed the achievements of the Guards on this 27th of September and succeeding days tells the same story.

The plan of attack was that the 1st Brigade, on the left, should maintain its position while the 2nd Brigade stormed the enemy's strongholds at the coal-mine works known as Puits 14 *bis* and the Chalk-pit, both immediately to the north of Hill 70, the

3rd Brigade's task being to advance through Loos and attack Hill 70 as soon as the 2nd Brigade had reached its objectives. It was the 3rd Brigade which swung past the Londoners as if on parade, with the shells bursting all round them now that the enemy had also realized what was happening. Maintaining their artillery formation under this fire with undisturbed discipline the Grenadier, Scots, and Welsh Guards suffered no very heavy losses before entering Loos, where, however, a furious bombardment of gas shells forced them to don their smoke helmets before storming Hill 70 beyond. Not a few of the Guards were badly gassed, including the Colonel of the Grenadiers, the command of whose battalion thereupon devolved upon Major Myles Ponsonby.

The 2nd Brigade, it should be

<sup>1</sup> *Times*, October 14, 1915. The first account of the operations of the Guards at Loos appeared in the *Times* of November 8, 1915, to which we are indebted for some of our facts.



Drawn by Frédéric de Haenen

The Guards in Action near Loos: the capture of the Spinney near the Chalk-pit

added, had advanced with the same superb spirit and discipline as the 3rd, and had carried the Hulluch-Loos road without serious casualties, the Irish and Coldstream Guards thence rushing the thicket and Chalk-pit beyond, while the Scots Guards, skirting the thicket at its southern end,



Captain O. Traherne Williams, D.S.O., Welsh Guards,  
killed on Hill 70, September 27, 1915  
(From a photograph by Elliott & Fry)

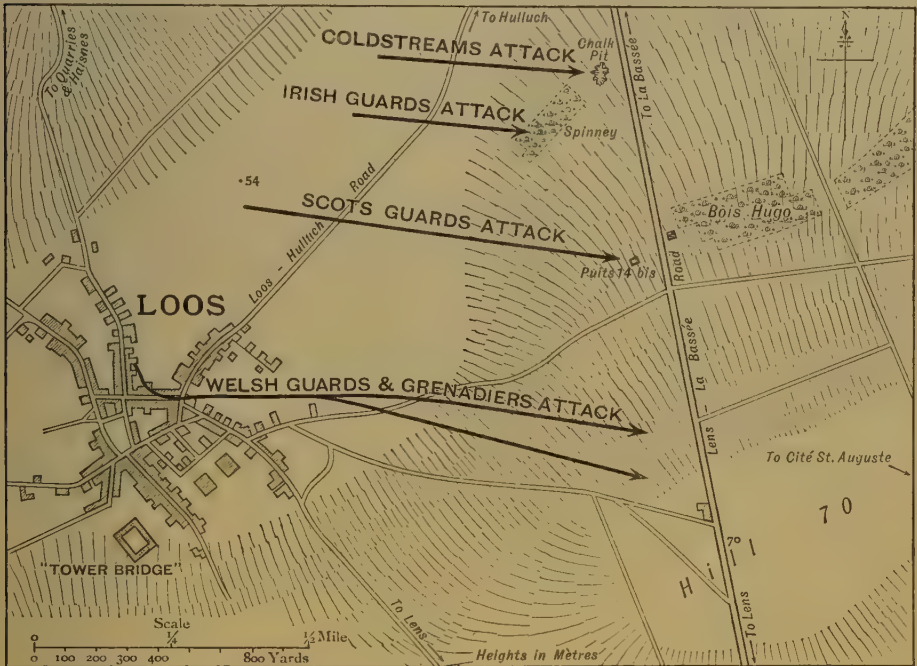
pushed on towards the fortified mining buildings and "keep" of Puits 14 *bis*. The Chalk-pit and thicket were captured and held, but the Scots Guards, though at one time having the Puits practically in their possession, were unable to maintain their hold, the whole position being, as Sir John French explains in his dispatch, most effectively commanded by well-posted machine-guns. The Scots Guards held on until only a few survivors remained, under Captain Cuth-

bert, D.S.O., twelve of his brother officers having fallen here, including the Colonel, who was wounded. With Captain Cuthbert, according to the *Times* special correspondent, were a handful of Grenadiers, under Second-Lieutenant A. T. Ayres-Ritchie—the remnants of two companies of the 3rd Battalion which had rushed up to support the Scots in their desperate plight. Unable to receive any further reinforcements, and being rapidly exterminated, the survivors were at length forced gradually to retire and dig themselves in a short distance back.

In the meantime the 3rd Brigade of Guards, as we have seen, had put on their gas helmets in Loos preparatory to the attack on Hill 70. This was now assigned to the Welsh Guards, with the remainder of the Grenadiers, some companies of whom, as we have seen, had gone to the support of the 2nd Brigade. The occasion will be memorable in military annals as the day on which the Welsh Guards were blooded, for they were one of the new regiments which had never been in action before. They had already shown in the advance across the open under fire that they were worthy "comrades in arms of His Majesty's Guards", and they now charged with the Grenadiers in splendid style, pressing the enemy back from his formidable works on the nearer slopes of Hill 70, and then off the top of the hill itself. Here, however, they paid a cruel price for their triumph, falling under a tremendous fire from concealed machine-guns, and losing heavily. It was at this moment that

Captain Osmond Traherne Williams fell mortally wounded while helping to save a wounded private, thus cutting short a career which had been one of the romances of the war.<sup>1</sup> His namesake, Captain Rhys Williams, won the D.S.O. on the same occasion, when

"He then", to quote from the *Gazette*, "obtained a dressing for his wound and returned to the guns, which he continued to control until midnight, having to lie on his back for the purpose owing to the nature of his wounds." During the afternoon some



The Guards' Division at Loos: map illustrating the combined attack on September 27, 1915

he commanded the Welsh Guards' machine-guns, performing extremely effective work with them until wounded.

<sup>1</sup> Captain Williams, the eldest surviving son of Sir Osmond Williams, Bart., of Castle Deudraeth, Lord-Lieutenant of Merionethshire, and husband of Lady Gladys Margaret Finch-Hatton, only daughter of Lord Winchilsea, was once described as the most brilliant subaltern in the British cavalry. A serious hunting accident had forced his retirement from the 19th Hussars, and, failing to convince the War Office on the outbreak of the Great War that his health was thoroughly re-established, he enlisted as a trooper in the Scots Greys, in which he won a commission for distinguished service in the field during the retreat

of the dismounted cavalry were sent up from Loos to strengthen our hold on the hill, and by midnight the Welsh

from Mons and the battle of the Marne. Before the end of 1914 he had won the D.S.O. for heroic conduct near Messines, and when the new regiment of Welsh Guards was formed he transferred to it, and obtained his captaincy. An eloquent tribute to his brave and chivalrous nature was paid by the presence at his "field" funeral of four generals and many of his old Hussar comrades, as well as all the Welsh Guards who could attend. "He could have had no greater compliment," wrote one of his brother officers, "as funerals are so common that half a dozen intimate friends is a fair tribute to a fallen man."



Guards, sadly reduced in numbers, were relieved by the Scots Guards, who dug themselves in about 100 yards below the fatal summit, where nothing could show itself and live. "No comment of mine", telegraphed Major-General Sir Francis Lloyd to the Lord Mayor of Cardiff at the time, "is necessary on what the Welsh Guards have accomplished. We must deeply regret the losses they have sustained, but it is for a noble cause—for King and Country. They have established on a firm basis the fighting qualities of the Welsh Guards." That night the gallant Scotsmen of the 15th Division, their long trial at length at an end, were gradually withdrawn from the firing-line. On the same day, while the Guards were fighting for Hill 70, the 47th Division of London Territorials captured a wood on their right, farther to the south, and also repulsed a severe hostile counter-attack.

During that eventful Monday the 3rd Field Squadron of the Royal Engineers had greatly distinguished itself at Loos in consolidating the position held by the cavalry brigade, both Captain Victor H. Simon and Lieutenant Richard D. Pank winning the Military Cross. Lieutenant Pank was wounded during the afternoon, and later in the day his whole party were temporarily knocked out by the explosion of a large shell within a few feet of them, four men being wounded; "yet he went out again the same night", says the *Gazette*, "and assisted in consolidating the cavalry brigade's position". Both on this and the previous night officers of the 1st (Royal) Dra-

goons had taken their lives in their hands in reconnoitring the open ground between Loos and Chalk-pit Wood and other unhealthy spots in the neighbourhood, Second-Lieutenant A. W. Wingate and Second-Lieutenant W. O. Berryman being awarded the Military Cross for invaluable services of this hazardous description. A large number of the wounded infantry, as well as cavalymen, were tended and evacuated throughout the 26th and 27th by the two cavalry field-ambulances then stationed at Loos. During the greater part of this time the captured town was deluged with shells by the infuriated Germans. For his self-sacrificing services throughout this critical period Major Geoffrey W. G. Hughes, of the 6th Cavalry Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps, received the Distinguished Service Order, also awarded to Captain Whiteford J. E. Bell, No. 2 Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps, who had commanded a bearer division since August, 1914, and visited the advanced post day and night under continuous fire during the operations near Loos; and to Captain Arthur J. M. Menzies, of the same corps, attached to the 1st (Royal) Dragoons, for unremitting attention to the wounded of all units. "Captain Menzies", says the *Gazette*, "was twice seen carrying wounded on a stretcher under rifle-fire, and for fifty-five hours was exposing himself to heavy bombardment while carrying out his duties in Loos."

The following morning, Tuesday, September 28, found the Scots Guards firmly consolidated on the western slopes of Hill 70, some 100 yards

from the summit, with the Cavalry Brigade on their right, and the gap separating them from the 2nd Brigade of Guards swept by machine-gun fire. This position the 3rd Brigade of Guards held in the face of incessant bombardment from the enemy's guns until Wednesday night, when, under cover of darkness, they were relieved by the 142nd Brigade.

In the meanwhile the 2nd Brigade of Guards, on the Tuesday afternoon, had returned to the attack on Puits 14 *bis*, the Coldstreams advancing from the captured Chalk-pit, while our machine-guns and rifles concentrated their fire on the Bois Hugo, which the Germans had packed with quick-firers commanding the whole ground in front. It was this fortified wood which had cost the Guards a large proportion of their casualties on the previous day, and it remained a death-trap on the present occasion. The Coldstreams debouched from the Chalk-pit only to fall beneath its withering fire, save for some heroic survivors, who, under Lieutenant C. J. M. Riley, succeeded in reaching the mining stronghold. Here, however, the position proved as hopeless as on the previous day, and the thinned ranks of the brave Coldstreams, at length forced to abandon the attempt, had to content themselves with consolidating the ground already won. According to the *Gazette* it was on this day that Second-Lieutenant A. T. Ayres-Ritchie, who was awarded the Military Cross, distinguished himself in the attack on the Puits, with some of the 3rd Grenadier Guards, in the following circumstances:—

"When his captain was wounded early in the action he led the company to the assault and reorganized it, although himself severely wounded in the right arm. He then, with the assistance of a corporal, bombed and destroyed a German machine-gun and team. Finally, when his position had become untenable, he ordered a withdrawal, while he himself reconnoitred the enemy's defences under heavy fire and brought back most valuable information. He had been wounded and suffered great pain for six hours before he went to a dressing station."

The corporal mentioned as sharing in the destruction of the machine-gun and crew—located in one of the fortified houses—rushing out and throwing bombs into the window regardless of all personal risk, was D. Hewitt, who received the D.C.M. The same decoration was won during this action by Lance-Sergeant Printer, of the 1st Coldstreams, who, with Sergeant Hopkins, went out from our trenches at the Chalk-pit to rescue a comrade lying wounded close to the Bois Hugo. They were bringing him back when Sergeant Hopkins was shot down by a German sniper, but, nothing daunted, Lance-Sergeant Printer "carried on" with the wounded man, and, bringing him in safely, went out again with Captain Robartes and rescued Sergeant Hopkins.

In the heavy shelling ordeal to which the 2nd Guards Brigade, like the 3rd on Hill 70, was subjected on the following day (Wednesday), the 1st Coldstreams had to mourn the loss of their commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur G. E. Egerton, who, with the Adjutant, was killed during the afternoon in the captured Chalk-



Lieutenant-Colonel A. G. E. Egerton, commanding 1st Coldstream Guards, killed while holding the Chalk-pit near Loos on September 29, 1915

(From a photograph by Wrather & Buys)

pit. Lieutenant-Colonel Egerton, who was the eldest son of the late Colonel Sir Alfred Egerton and the Hon. Lady Egerton, had served with the Coldstreams in the South African campaign, and in the present war had been wounded during the battle of the Aisne. He had taken over the command of the 1st Battalion only a few days before his death. Another Coldstream officer killed in these operations was the Hon. Thomas C. Agar-Robartes, Liberal M.P. for the St. Austell division, and heir to the Viscounty of Clifden. He was not the only British M.P. to lay down his life for his country in the great attack, Colonel Lord Ninian Crichton-Stuart, Conservative member for Cardiff and brother of the Marquis of Bute, meeting his death while heroically leading an assault

with the object of rescuing one of his officers who had been cut off by the enemy. Lord Ninian was commanding the 6th Welsh Regiment—the Glamorgan Territorials—when the Germans, attacking in overwhelming numbers, compelled the abandonment of a trench which had previously been captured from them. When it was found that Major Browning was missing, the regiment, led by their gallant colonel, made repeated attempts to rescue him, and it was in one of these forlorn hopes that Lord Ninian was shot in the head and killed. “We have lost the best and finest colonel that ever led his regiment into action,” was the tribute of one of his non-commissioned officers. Including Mr. Agar-Robartes, Lord Ninian Crichton-Stuart was the fifth Member of Parliament since the war began to make the



Lieutenant the Hon. Thomas C. Agar-Robartes, M.P., Coldstream Guards, killed in the Allied Offensive

(From a photograph by Bassano)





Colonel Lord Ninian Crichton-Stuart, M.P., commanding the 6th Welsh Regiment, killed in the Allied Offensive  
(From a photograph by Elliott & Fry)

supreme sacrifice in his country's cause. The Royal Stuarts were also nobly represented on the same stricken field by Lieutenant Viscount Stuart, 6th Royal Scots Fusiliers, eldest son of the Earl of Castlestewart, the male representative of the historic house. Lord Stuart, who was killed in action, applied for his commission in the army soon after the outbreak of war, and had only been in France some three or four months before the great attack. His brother, Captain the Hon. R. S. Stuart, 1st Royal Scots Fusiliers, had been reported wounded and missing since November 2, 1914, and all efforts to trace him had since proved unavailing. The next in succession was Lieutenant the Hon. Arthur Stuart, 7th Royal Berkshires, brigademachin- gun officer, 78th Infantry Brigade.

On the evening of September 28—

to resume the main thread of our story—the situation round Loos remained practically unchanged, save that the London Territorials had gained a little more ground on the south, capturing another field-gun and a few more machine-guns. A heavy price had been paid by all the regiments of the newly-formed Division of Guards for their hard-won advance. Though not completely successful, they had almost restored our former line of victory in this area of the battle-field, bringing it up parallel to and slightly west of the Lens-La Bassée road. The action was memorable as the baptism of fire not only of the Welsh Guards but also of the 2nd Irish, the regiment created by Queen Victoria in 1900 to commemorate the heroism of the Irish troops in the South African War. As King George said, in addressing the Reserve Battalion on the following St. Patrick's Day, the 2nd Irish had confirmed at Loos the high reputation already won by the 1st Battalion in the retreat from Mons and the crisis of the First Battle of Ypres.

While the French on the right had all this time been fighting valiantly for the Vimy heights, they were still very heavily opposed, and Sir John French, feeling that the advance they were able to make did not afford sufficient protection to his right flank, discussed the situation on the morning of the 28th with General Foch, commanding the northern group of the French armies, who had been instructed by General Joffre, on Sir John French's representations, to see what could be done to help him. "General Foch", writes Sir John, "met these demands in the

same friendly spirit which he has always displayed throughout the course of the whole campaign, and expressed his readiness to give me all the support he could." It was accordingly arranged to send the 9th French Corps to take over the ground held by us from the French left up to and including Loos and that portion which we were holding of Hill 70. This movement began on Thursday, September 30, and was completed on the two following nights.

The relief was the more necessary because the line occupied by the troops of the First Army south of the canal had become very much extended by the salient with which it indented the enemy's line. The battle had raged practically without ceasing along the northern part of this new line, especially about the Hohenzollern Redoubt and neighbouring trenches, where, as we have shown, the enemy had won back the position at Fosse 8 on Monday, the 27th. The fight for this point continued day and night with unflagging fury. On Tuesday, the 28th, when the regimental bombers of the 1st Royal Berkshires could make no headway in Slag Alley, Second-Lieutenant A. Buller Turner, who was attached to the 1st from the 3rd Battalion, volunteered to lead a new bombing attack.

"He pressed down the communication-trench practically alone," records the *Gazette*, "throwing bombs incessantly with such dash and determination that he drove back the Germans about 150 yards without a check. His action enabled the reserves to advance with very little loss, and subsequently covered the flank of his regiment in its retirement, thus probably averting a loss of some hundreds of men."

Unfortunately, this most gallant officer, who subsequently received the Victoria Cross, died of wounds received in the fight. When most of the Berkshire officers in this attack had been killed or wounded, Sergeant-Major W. King led the men with the greatest bravery, displaying excellent qualities of leadership in reorganizing



Second-Lieutenant A. Buller Turner, of the Royal Berkshires, who won the V.C. and lost his life in the fighting for the Hohenzollern Redoubt on September 28, 1915

the battalion under what are officially described as most trying conditions. He was rewarded with the D.C.M. The 2nd Buffs (East Kent Regiment) also shared the losses—including their commander, Lieutenant-Colonel C. A. Worthington, who was killed—as well as the honours of these operations round Fosse 8 on the 28th. Second-Lieutenant W. T. Williams, who received the Military Cross, took charge of a small party of bombers, and dur-

ing 17½ hours threw with them close upon 2000 bombs, while the enemy responded with about five times that number.

"It was raining nearly all the time," adds the *Gazette*, "and the damp fuses had to be lit from cigarettes, yet the enemy were held up. Second-Lieutenant Williams, though wounded, refused to leave his post, and it was mainly due to his bravery and that of his party that the trench was finally held."

When the enemy first threatened our right flank on this occasion, Private W. Smith, of the same battalion, though not trained to the work, went forward alone with a box of bombs and started throwing. Unable to hold the Germans in check in the trench, he jumped up on to the parapet, and though under fire the whole time, lit and threw his bombs from there. He was wounded in the left arm, but kept the enemy back until the regimental bombers arrived, thus well earning the D.C.M. Another D.C.M. fell to the 2nd Buffs that day, won by Private Hoddinott for voluntarily conveying an urgent message across the open. "The fire was continuous and intense, and the attempt appeared almost certain death." Many of the wounded at this point owed their lives to the heroism of Captain Charles Stewart Parnell Hamilton, attached to the 2nd Buffs from the Royal Army Medical Corps, who tended them in the firing line for days and nights together—often where the bombers were actually fighting—with a devotion above and beyond all praise. He was subsequently decorated with the D.S.O.

Day by day the struggle continued

unabated round the Hohenzollern and its grim surroundings, the Germans, as Sir John French remarked, evidently attaching the utmost value to this sinister stronghold. They succeeded in gaining some further ground in and about the Redoubt, but they paid heavily for it in the losses they suffered. The 2nd East Surreys and the 1st York and Lancaster Regiment shared the brunt of their onslaughts on the 29th, and each had added a Victoria Cross to its laurels at the end of the day. One of these was awarded to Second-Lieutenant A. J. T. Fleming-Sandes, of the 2nd East Surreys, who was sent to command a company which the enemy's attack had left in a very critical position.

"The troops on his right were retiring, and his own men, who were much shaken by continual bombing and machine-gun fire, were also beginning to retire owing to shortage of bombs. Taking in the situation at a glance, he collected a few bombs, jumped on to the parapet in full view of the Germans, who were only 20 yards away, and threw them. Although very severely wounded almost at once by a bomb, he struggled to his feet and continued to advance and throw bombs till he was again severely wounded. This most gallant act put new heart into his men, rallied them, and saved the situation."<sup>1</sup>

The 1st York and Lancasters' Victoria Cross was earned by Private Samuel Harvey while they were holding "Big Willy" trench and the Ger-

<sup>1</sup> Many of the East Surreys gave a grand exhibition of steadfast bravery on this occasion, as well as during the ensuing forty-eight hours, while those attacks and counter-attacks continued. Among those who received the D.C.M. were Sergeant G. Green, Acting-Sergeant C. Spencer, Lance-Corporal D. Donovan, Private G. Puttock, and Private W. Theobald.



mans were heavily attacking their flanks. The situation grew desperate as their supply of bombs diminished, whereupon Private Harvey volunteered to get fresh supplies. The communication trench being blocked with wounded and reinforcements, he fearlessly went backwards and forwards across the open and succeeded in bringing up no fewer than thirty boxes of bombs before he was wounded in the head. "It was mainly due to Private Harvey's cool bravery in supplying bombs", states the *Gazette*, "that the enemy was eventually driven back." It was also due, it should be added, to the unwavering courage of all ranks of this devoted regiment. When, for example, all his company officers having been killed and wounded, Company Sergeant-Major G. W. Richell was left in charge, he repulsed the repeated onslaughts of the Germans with splendid coolness and judgment; Private T. Jones hurled bombs from his parapet under direct and constant fire, and helped to retake the trench after nearly all his fellow-bombers were killed or wounded; Private A. Street stood on the parapet and fired while the bombers advanced down the sap covered by him, remaining at his perilous post until the enemy had been repulsed; Private J. W. Shaw twice crawled across the open under heavy fire to the German parapet and threw bombs into the ranks of the German bombers, who were attacking our right flank; and Sergeant J. Brown, when no officer or other non-commissioned officer was left in his platoon, held on to a vital position with the utmost gallantry until he him-

self was wounded. All these heroes of the York and Lancasters were rewarded with the D.C.M. Two days previously, it is worth recording, the same regiment had distinguished itself by a dashing exploit in which Second-Lieutenant B. A. Bates, attached to the 1st from the 3rd Battalion, had won the Military Cross. The Germans on this occasion captured the officer's trench at a time when his men had run out of bombs. Thereupon, taking six of the men with fixed bayonets, he gradually, by his revolver and rifle fire, drove the enemy completely out of the trench, and then re-established communications.

The 3rd Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) also lived up to their great reputation in their share of the renewed battle in this appalling region between the 27th of September and the end of the month. When the Adjutant became a casualty on the 27th, Second-Lieutenant J. E. French took over his duties, and by his coolness and courage helped to keep up the men's spirits throughout, on one occasion leading a charge and retaking a portion of trench from which the garrison had been driven by a heavy German counter-attack, and constantly carrying messages under a hail of shot and shell for four days and nights. He received the Military Cross, also awarded to Second-Lieutenant John Bessell, attached to the Royal Fusiliers from the 3rd Dorsetshires, whose bravery and resource were largely instrumental in preventing the enemy from outflanking the battalion; and to Captain J. Murray M'Laggan, attached to the

same battalion from the Royal Army Medical Corps, whose coolness and resource when attending to the wounded in the firing line, working incessantly with unflagging energy for three days and four nights, undoubtedly saved many lives. On the 29th Captain Charles H. Sykes, attached to the 3rd from the 6th Battalion

back by superior numbers, and succeeded in regaining all the lost ground. He displayed throughout great bravery and coolness. He was wounded on the morning of September 30."

This sorely-tried battalion was badly broken up by its heavy casualties in the course of all this fierce and protracted fighting, but Company Ser-



The Camera in the Fighting-line: shrapnel shell bursting along the Allies' line in France  
The photograph, it will be seen, was taken at the very moment of the explosion. Immediately afterwards the tops of the trees seen clouded in the smoke were blown to pieces

Royal Fusiliers, won the D.S.O. for a series of gallant acts recorded in the *Gazette* as follows:—

"When some troops on his left were bombed out of their position he led a charge with about a dozen, drove out the Germans, and retook the lost portion of trench. He even penetrated further, and only fell back later owing to want of support. He saved a serious situation by his gallantry and initiative. Later on the same day, when under heavy shell-fire, he supported a company which was being driven

geant-Major Wells, who received the D.C.M., displayed untiring energy and ability in reorganizing his men, as well as the utmost bravery in the attack and counter-attack, although twice wounded. The D.C.M. was also won by Private A. E. Jackson, of the same battalion, for total disregard of personal danger in rescuing wounded men under fire. Other regiments who shared the distinctions and the suffering of this life-and-death

struggle were the 2nd East Yorkshires, who twice drove out successful German bombing parties which had broken into the trenches of other battalions;<sup>1</sup> 1st King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry; 2nd Worcester-shires; and 3rd Middlesex.

28th-29th, when the Germans were actually holding the northern corner of the Hohenzollern, and bombing heavily up all the communication trenches, after an extremely risky reconnaissance succeeded in completely wiring the line within 50 yards of the



Heavy Artillery in the Allied Offensive: loading one of the French 155-mm. guns in its cunningly concealed position

Nor should we omit to record the daring feat which won the Military Cross for Lieutenant Geoffrey Cheet-ham, 90th Field Company Royal Engineers, who on the night of the

<sup>1</sup> Second-Lieutenant R. J. H. Galtrell, attached to the 2nd from the 3rd Battalion East Yorkshire Regiment, received the Military Cross for conspicuous gallantry on both occasions. He was severely wounded in the second action.

enemy; nor the magnificent devotion of Lieutenant George Rankine, of the Royal Army Medical Corps, in attending to the wounded. On one occasion, states the *Gazette* in recording his award of the Military Cross, Lieutenant Rankine went with a party of bearers as far as the Redoubt, assisting in rescuing the wounded under



a storm of bombs and shells. On the return journey a shell burst in their midst, killing and wounding many of the bearers, whereupon this gallant officer completed the journey with a wounded man on his back.

Such were some of the deeds which redeem this grim tale of untold slaughter in and about the battered trenches of the Hohenzollern, converting the whole region into one vast charnel-house. These isolated facts, thus pieced together, give us at least some idea of the frightful ordeal which faced our troops when they launched their first attack on that memorable 25th of September, and still faced them, after endless vicissitudes, throughout the ensuing winter, battling for every yard.

By the end of September the second phase of the first Battle of Loos was over. The losses had been prodigious on both sides. Those of the enemy, on all parts of the front during this Allied Offensive, were given, as far as could be estimated, on p. 191, Vol. IV. The total British losses at Loos, and in the simultaneous operations at adjacent parts of the Western front, were officially stated in the House of Commons in the following January as 57,288, but these figures covered the fighting from September 25 right on to October 8, the date of the tremendous German counter-attack, when the enemy left some eight to nine thousand dead lying on the battle-field in front of the Allies' trenches. Of the total British casualties for the whole period nearly 40,000 were wounded.

When, on September 30, Sir John French, after discussing the situation with General Foch, broke off his offensive for the time being, he issued a Special Order to his Army, briefly explaining the general position, and paying a well-earned tribute to the magnificent efforts of all ranks:—

"I desire to express to the Army under my command", he concluded, "my deep appreciation of the splendid work they have accomplished, and my heartfelt thanks for the brilliant leadership displayed by General Sir Douglas Haig and the Corps and Divisional Commanders who acted under his orders in the main attack. In the same spirit of admiration and gratitude I wish particularly to comment upon the magnificent spirit, indomitable courage, and dogged tenacity displayed by the troops, Old Army, New Army, and Territorials have vied with one another in the heroic conduct displayed throughout the battle by officers, non-commissioned officers, and men. I feel the utmost confidence and assurance that the same glorious spirit which has been so marked a feature throughout will continue until our efforts are crowned by final and complete victory."

On the same day Sir John French received the following message from His Majesty the King:—

"I heartily congratulate you and all ranks of my Army under your command upon the success which has attended their gallant efforts since the commencement of the combined attack. I recognize that this strenuous and determined fighting is but the prelude to greater deeds and further victories. I trust the sick and wounded are doing well.

"GEORGE, R.I."

To this the following reply was sent:—

"To His Majesty the King,

*"1st October, 1915.*

"Your Majesty's Forces in France are deeply grateful for Your Majesty's most gracious message. There is no sacrifice the troops are not prepared to make to uphold the honour and traditions of Your Majesty's Army and to secure final and complete victory.

"J. D. P. FRENCH, Field-Marshal."

tremendous strength of the positions captured, the stubborn defence of the enemy, and the powerful artillery by which he was supported. Of the casualties, too, he reported that the proportion of slightly wounded was very large indeed.

Some account must now be given of the operations of the French troops



Our Prisoners of War from Loos: some of the 3000 passing through Southampton to their destination

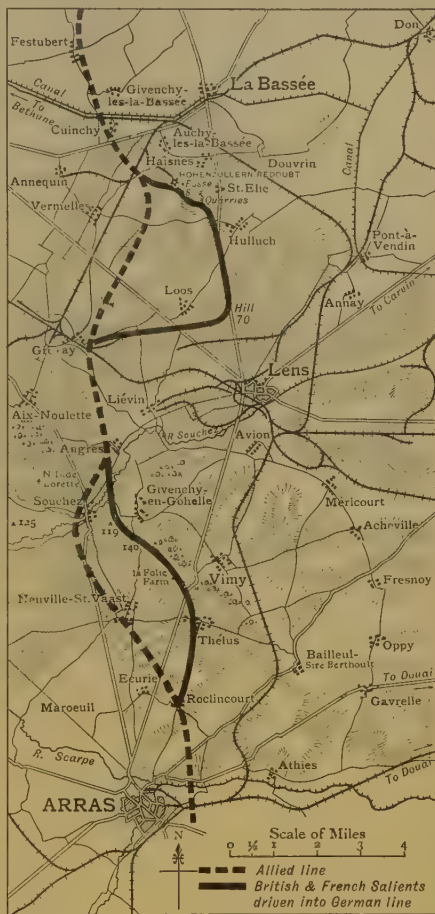
In his dispatch of October 15 the Field-Marshal stated that the total number of prisoners captured during these operations amounted to 57 officers and 3000 other ranks, while the material which fell into our hand included 26 field-guns, 40 machine-guns, and 3 minenwerfer. While deeply regretting the heavy casualties incurred in the battle, he did not think they were excessive, in view of the

under Generals Foch and d'Urbal on the right of the British Army, leaving the greater and more distant battle of our French Allies in Champagne to be dealt with elsewhere. While our men were storming Loos at daybreak on September 25, the 10th French Army, as we have seen, was unable to advance until past midday, and its left Corps, instead of linking up with the London Territorials on our right,

had to be directed in a more or less south-easterly direction. Here our Allies' attack concentrated towards the heights of the Vimy ridge, whence the ground slopes towards Lens. The Germans were thus threatened from the south by the French and from the north and north-west by the British, though the joint simultaneous thrust which the Allied commanders had doubtless hoped might carry them both into the town together had, of necessity, to be abandoned. The French advance was the natural sequence to their constant hammering at the German positions north of Arras. The whole region round the famous Labyrinth, like the Hohenzollern Redoubt on the British front, had been converted into a shambles, and the Germans dislodged foot by foot, only to extend the subterraneous battle-field as they withdrew. But all the time the French were gaining ground towards the coveted plain of Lens. They had driven the enemy from what he called the "accursed" ridge of Notre Dame de Lorette, and early in the summer of 1915 had dislodged him from Carency and Ablain-St. Nazaire; and now the Vimy heights formed the last formidable crest which stood between them and their immediate goal.

Before they could carry these outposts of Lens, however, they had to capture the village of Souchez, now, like all the little towns and hamlets in this war-ridden area, nothing but a heap of fortified ruins. The Germans had done their best to make this shattered village impregnable, and, with their powerful batteries at Angres to

the north and on Hills 119 and 140 to the west, and their elaborate defence works in the Château de Carleul, garrisoned as an outwork on the south,



The Allies' Line in Artois before and after the Great Offensive of September, 1915

as well as their deep dug-outs and strong fortifications in the village itself, they very nearly succeeded. Here, as at Loos, a dreary downpour of rain on the 25th made the going frightfully



heavy for the attacking troops, but the French artillery preparation had been similarly effective, reducing many of the enemy trenches, shelters, block-houses, and batteries to little more than heaps of rubbish. When at length the first assault was delivered—at 12.25,

hills, which belched forth an annihilating storm of shrapnel and asphyxiating shells, held the advancing troops for a time in check. Before the day was over, too, the cemetery at Souchez had been lost again, and the further advance on the village postponed



The French Advance at Souchez: Chasseurs à Pied, wearing the new steel helmets, examining one of the captured German trenches

according to the French official report—the right of the advance captured the Château and park of Carleul, the centre stormed the fortified cemetery, and the left wing, pouring down from Notre Dame de Lorette, seized the edge of the Bois en Hache within twenty minutes of the signal to charge. At this point, however, the countless machine-guns at close range, and the German batteries on the neighbouring

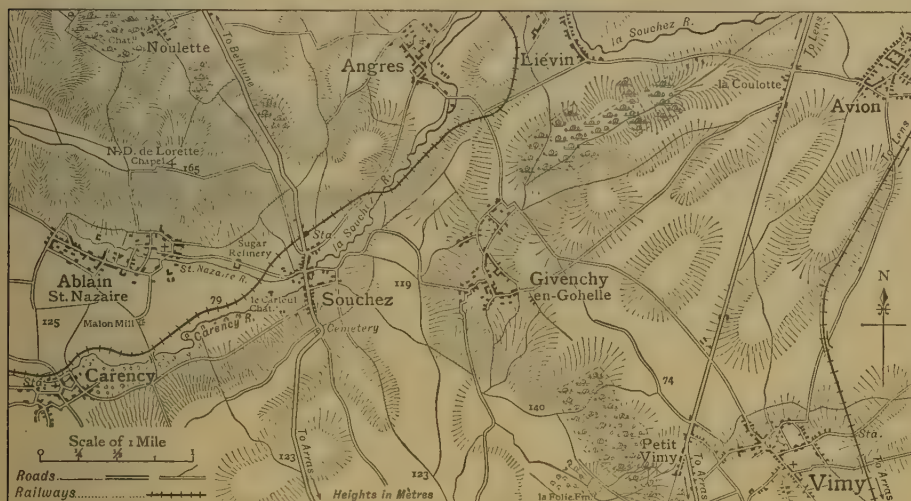
until the morrow. Other bodies of French troops in the meantime had made good progress to the south, carrying the last trenches still held by the enemy to the east of the Labyrinth.

On the following day the ceaseless pressure of our Allies gradually forced back the Germans at Souchez, and, fearful at last lest they should be entirely cut off, they abandoned both the

village and the cemetery, retiring upon Hill 119. Farther south the French reached La Folie, and pushed north of Thelus as far as the destroyed telegraph station, capturing altogether in the course of this fighting some 1400 officers and men.

The Vimy heights, however, with their maze of hidden defence-works on

front to meet the threatening emergency in the West—and it was only after almost superhuman efforts, and days and nights of terrific fighting, that the French made any further appreciable progress. By the time the battle as a whole had temporarily died down on the British front—though still raging furiously at isolated points



The Scene of the French Attack on Souchez and the Vimy Heights, September 25-30, 1915

every slope, still barred the way to Lens, and though the victorious French troops swept on through Souchez towards Givenchy-en-Gohelle and carried the lower ridges of Hill 119, to which the survivors of the German garrison of Souchez had retreated, it was not until September 28 that the attack on these stupendous positions was seriously pressed. By that time, as at Loos, the Germans had brought up immense reinforcements—including in this area two divisions of the Prussian Guard, rushed back from the Eastern

—and the 9th French Corps had taken over Loos and the right flank of the British line as far as Hill 70, our Allies had at length made themselves masters not only of a vital part of Givenchy Wood, but also of the western slopes of the Vimy crest. Here for the present we must leave them, consolidating their gains, and, like the British on their left, preparing to inflict a bloody repulse on the Germans when, in due course, they launched their inevitable counter-attack.

F. A. M.

## CHAPTER XII

## THE SECOND HALF OF 1915 AT SEA

(August–December, 1915)

A Fragmentary Record—Germany and the Fear of Complications with the United States—British Naval Operations on the Flemish Coast—Torpedo work in the Baltic and the Mediterranean.

PART of the work done at sea in the course of 1915 must be left to stand over till the following year. In December the navy was called on to help in withdrawing the troops from Anzac in the Gallipoli Peninsula, but this operation was not completed till the following January, when the evacuation was completed by the retreat of the Expeditionary Force from other points. It was only a portion of a whole which must be dealt with in another chapter.

When we survey the course of the war at sea during the latter part of 1915, it appears to have a rather fragmentary and indecisive character, and this was inevitable. The enemy was baffled, and, at least for the time, driven off the sea. His submarine blockade of the British Isles had not only failed to suspend British commerce, but had brought on him the danger of a rupture of relations with the United States. The failure was due to measures of precaution taken to limit the activity of his submarines, but it may be the case that the fear of complications with the American Government tended to render him cautious. The main work of the British navy in home waters was steadily and successfully performed. The trade routes, or such of them as were indispensable, were kept open, while the transport of

troops and stores to fields of operation overseas was not suspended for a day. It is true, and could not but be true, that the obligation to supply the great multitude of troops engaged in the various seats of war had a definite reaction on our economic position. When so large a proportion of our total tonnage was taken for military purposes, then what remained to be used for the general purposes of trade was bound to be inadequate to meet all the calls made on it. But this is a subject which must be treated as a whole, and when it can be dealt with by itself. The military side of the navy's work during this part of the year, that is to say, the direct operations of war in home waters, were limited to the control of the sea, and operations against coasts in the possession of the enemy. Beyond home waters we have to look to such operations as took place in the Baltic and in the Mediterranean, which of course includes the Adriatic. None of them could be decisive, since no occasion presented itself for an attack on the bulk of the enemy's naval forces where they could be fairly brought to action. In the absence of an opening for a stricken field, nothing could be done save to maintain a close watch, and enforce it by minor actions.

We must needs treat the British seas as being the foundation of the



whole naval war. Only so long as they are fully guarded can there be a chance for success elsewhere. That the work was effectually done is proved by patent facts—the entire cessation of attacks on our coast by the German navy, the number and success of our attacks on a coast in possession of the enemy, and the steady flow of our commerce. It is enough to note a minus quantity, and so nothing more need be said of the stop put to German raids. Our own operations are recorded in the dispatch of Vice-Admiral Bacon, dated December 3, 1915, and made public with rather unusual promptitude on January 13 following.

In April, 1915, Admiral Bacon succeeded, as commander of the Dover Patrol, Rear-Admiral the Hon. H. L. A. Hood, whose bombardment of the Belgian coast was described in Vol. I., Chapter XIV. The summer months of the war were busily employed in preliminary operations and the accumulation of forces. The nature of the coast on which Admiral Bacon had to act, its many shallows, and the sands called the Banks of Flanders which run parallel to it, demanded the employment of specially chosen vessels. It was necessary to provide craft which could carry great guns and yet draw little water. Under the direction of Lord Fisher, who combined a remarkable mechanical faculty with a thorough appreciation of the conditions imposed on all war at sea, a number of warships describable as monitors, though they were not therefore in all respects similar to the American vessels known first by that name, were got ready. But they were not enough by them-

selves. They stood in need of protection against the enemy's submarines and other small craft which could employ the torpedo. The total force amounted to eighty units of varied character, the total being largely made up of patrol boats and destroyers, which acted as the guards of the monitors. The crews were largely, or even mainly, drawn from the Naval Reserve, or from the fishermen. The latter had been prepared by a lifetime spent in small vessels amid the perils of the North Sea navigation for the duties which were now assigned to them. Admiral Bacon also enjoyed the advantage of the co-operation of the Second French Light Cruiser Squadron, under Vice-Admiral Favereau. The patrol vessels of this squadron, under Commander Saillard, took a prominent part in protecting the monitors, and suffered a large proportion of the loss incurred.

The operations recorded in Admiral Bacon's dispatch began in August and were prolonged into October. It was on the 22nd of the month first named that the Admiral left in his flagship, the *Sir John Moore* (Commander S. R. Miller, R.N.), with the *Lord Clive* (Commander H. N. Carter, R.N.), and *Prince Rupert* (Commander H. O. Reinold, R.N.), all three monitors of the new types, and 76 auxiliaries. The successive events of the campaign under their order of date were as follows:—

On August 23 Admiral Bacon attacked the harbour and defences of Zeebrugge, the port at the end of the Bruges canal.

On September 6 Ostend was attacked with five monitors—the three already named,

the *General Crauford* (Commander E. Altham, R.N.), and the N25 (Lieutenant-Commander B. H. Ramsay).

On the same day Westende was bombarded by H.M.S. *Redoubtable* (Captain W. B. Molteno, R.N., who had the immediate command of the operation), H.M.S. *Bustard* (Lieutenant O. H. K. Maguire, R.N.), and the *Excellent* (Commander G. L. Sanrin, R.N.).

On September 19 Admiral Bacon, with a force which now included H.M.S. *Marshal Ney* (Captain H. J. Tweedie, R.N.), assailed the German coast defences in the neighbourhood of Middlekirke, Raversyde, and Westende. He was on this occasion supported by the French batteries at Nieuport.

On September 24, H.M.S. *Prince Eugene* (Captain E. Wigram, R.N.), supported by another monitor and auxiliaries, bombarded the coast at Knocke, Heyst, Zeebrugge, and Blankenberghe, to the east of Ostend. While this attack was in progress, Admiral Bacon himself, with the other vessels, including the *Lord Clive* (now commanded by Commander G. R. B. Blount, R.N.), assailed the coast to the east.

On September 26, 27, and 30, these bombardments were followed up by renewed attacks at Middlekirke and Westende.

On October 3 Zeebrugge was again bombarded.

On the 6th, 12th, 13th, and 18th of the month other positions of the enemy were fired into.

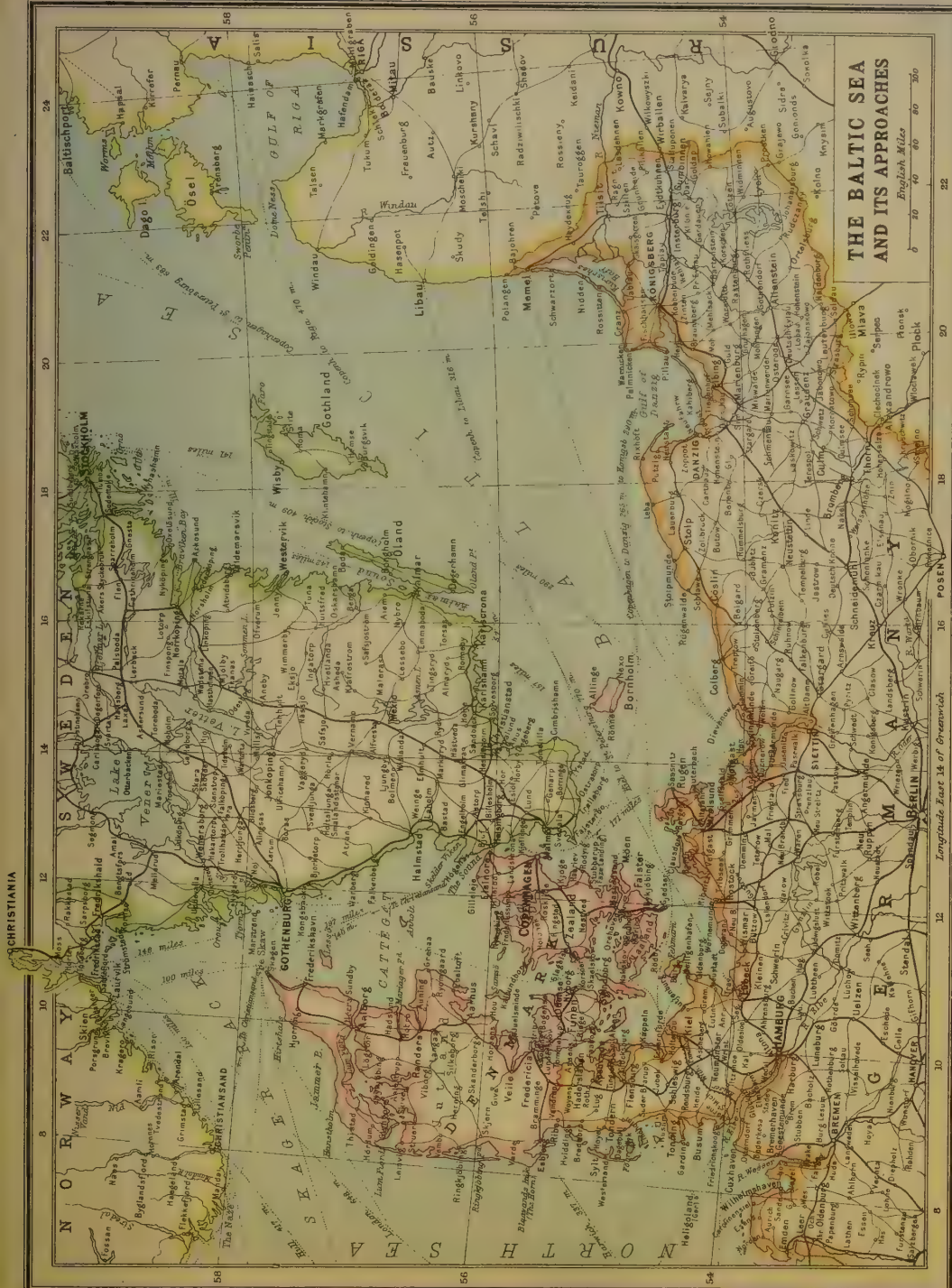
A bald statement of dates and events may not impress the reader as possessing interest, but in operations of this kind the repetition is of the very essence of the thing. It is by a prolonged succession of blows that the desired effect is at last produced. The constant activity of the allied naval forces on its west flank was in itself a check to the German army. It not only destroyed part of the enemy's total strength, but it distracted

his attention, and kept before him the depressing possibility that the bombardment might be the forerunner of a landing. The probability of such an operation might not be great, but it could not prudently be neglected.

There could not be any variety in the character of these attacks. In all cases the ships carrying heavy guns kept at a distance and maintained a long-range fire. The small craft would be stationed between them and the shore to ward off attacks by submarines or other torpedo-using vessels. In both ways Admiral Bacon was able to achieve good results. He could confidently claim that—

"The damage inflicted on the enemy is known to include the sinking of one torpedo-boat, two submarines, and one large dredger, the total destruction of three military factories, and damage to a fourth, extensive damage to the locks at Zeebrugge, and the destruction of 13 guns of considerable calibre, in addition to the destruction of two ammunition depôts and several military storehouses, observation stations and signalling posts, damage to wharves, moles, and other secondary places. Further, a considerable number of casualties are known to have been suffered by the enemy."

The casualties in the British squadrons were small—34 killed and 24 wounded. Three vessels were lost—the armed yacht *Sanda*, sunk by gun fire, the drifter *Great Heart*, and the mine-sweeper *Brighton Queen*, which were lost on mines. The loss of the *Sanda* was notable for a pathetic and honourable circumstance. Her commander, who perished in her, Lieutenant-Commander Gartside Tipping, was a veteran of seventy, a retired officer who volunteered to return to



# THE BALTIC SEA AND ITS APPROACHES

English Miles  
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service, and who in a high spirit of patriotism did duty in a position much below his seniority. Admiral Bacon could speak in the highest terms of the conduct of all the officers and men under his command, and especially of the fine behaviour of the fishermen, who did so much valuable work in the mine-sweepers.

The French lost three patrol boats, and suffered casualties of which the details were not given.

When we look beyond the four seas of Britain the most notable feature of the naval war in the last months of the year was the extension of submarine activity. It was during this period that British submarines became notably active in the Baltic. The German *Prinz Albert*, a cruiser of 9000 tons, was sunk by British submarines off Libau in October with the



The German Cruiser *Undine*, sunk by a British Submarine in the Baltic, November, 1915

greater part of her crew. The presence of these British vessels gave some aid to the Russian war-ships, which in the course of the month were able to harass the German garrisons on the Courland coast. At Dome Ness, at the entrance to the Gulf of Riga, the Russians were able to effect a landing, and destroy a German post with a loss of over forty to the enemy. Our submarines were able to retaliate on German trade in the Baltic for attacks on our own commerce in the outer seas.

Later in November the German *Undine* was sunk by a submarine on the coast of Sweden. Russian activity on the Courland coast continued after October, and a patrol vessel shared her fate. At one time it appeared not unlikely that a naval engagement might take place in the Cattegat, where British vessels



The German Cruiser *Bremen*, sunk by a British Submarine in the Baltic, December, 1915



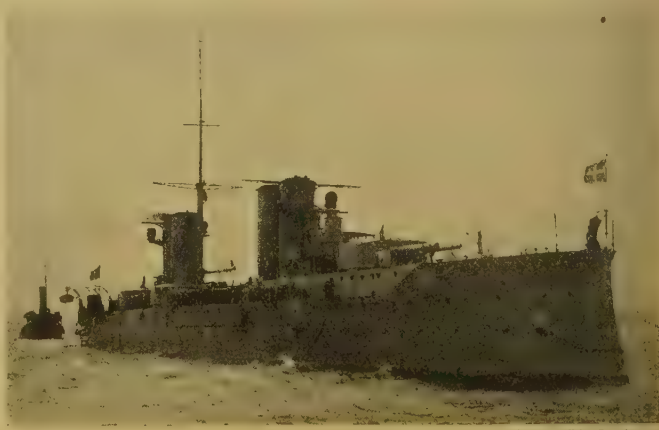
Italy's Share in the Naval War: the *Roma*, one of her eleven pre-Dreadnoughts

were reported as employed in covering a dash made by submarines into the Baltic, while German vessels were in the same waters to prevent their entry. The British venture was in part successful. Some of the submarines used were German prizes captured in the North Sea or Channel. Such operations as these continued till the end of the year, and the Germans suffered, losing in December the *Bremen*, a light cruiser, and a destroyer. But though the effect of these losses was to disturb the German hold on the inland sea, they could not reach the point when they drove the enemy into port or destroyed his activity. German ships and squadrons continued to cruise in Scandinavian waters and all parts of the Baltic till the setting-in of winter, which was a severe one, suspended naval movements.

The operations in different parts of the Mediterranean were similar in character.

Here, while the object of the Allies was to confine the enemy to port, so as to cover the passage of Italian troops to the east side of the Adriatic, and keep open the communications of the armies in the Levant, the purpose of the enemy was to molest

them in the performance of both duties. The war was, in consequence of these conditions, one of perpetual watch and raid. The watch was accompanied by bombardments of hostile ports. Dedegatch, the Bulgarian port on the Ægean, was assailed more than once. The object of the enemy could be achieved, even partially, only by submarine attack. The development of these vessels was rapid under the stress of war. They grew in armament and size, which implied that their cruising powers were increased. German submarines did undoubtedly succeed in effecting the



Photo, Crlbb, Southsea

Italy's Navy in 1915: one of her ten Armoured Cruisers



voyage from their home ports to the Mediterranean. They and the submarines already in those waters were able to make successful attacks on transports and trading ships from time to time. The British transport *Marquette* was torpedoed in the Ægean with a heavy loss of the troops, mostly Indian, which were in her, in October.

she was not sunk, she was driven to take refuge in port with a casualty list of 100 killed, wounded, and missing. The *Ramasan*, carrying Indian troops, was sunk with heavy loss near the island of Antecythera in the Ægean. Merchant ships were, as might be supposed, not spared. Eight were sunk by submarines, some of which



Drawn by H. W. Koekkoek

Mined in the English Channel: the sinking of the Hospital Ship *Anglia*

The British hospital ship *Anglia*, which had conveyed His Majesty King George across the Channel early in the same month, after his accident at the front, was sunk on November 17, 1915, with the loss of 85 lives. Some 300 survivors were saved by a patrol vessel which rushed to the rescue. Another ship, the collier *Lusitania*, was sunk by another mine while her boats were out picking up other survivors.

In spite of the rigorous measures taken by the Allies to discover and suppress the bases of supply of the enemy's submarines in Greek waters, his submarines could not be wholly suppressed. The Allies did not escape losses. The French submarine *Turquoise* was sunk in the Sea of Marmora by Turkish gun-fire. The British transport *Mercian* was attacked by submarines and gun-fire, and though

carried the Austrian flag, in a brief period in November. The sinking of the Italian steamer *Ancona*, near the coast of Sicily, by an Austrian submarine, created almost as deep a feeling as the destruction of the *Lusitania*. A considerable list of these victims of a barbarous method of conducting war might be made. The destruction of the British auxiliary cruiser *Tara*, on the north coast of Africa, was a legiti-

mate operation of war. The capture of Captain Wilson, M.P., in a Greek steamer by an Austrian submarine was irregular in the eyes of international law, but at least it was not a barbarism. What is a barbarism, the

sinking of merchant vessels, with little or no regard to the safety of their crews, went on steadily at the expense of British, French, and Italian shipping.

D. H.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE CAMPAIGN IN MESOPOTAMIA

(June–October, 1915)

Amphibious Warfare—Hardships of Summer Campaign in Mesopotamia—Adventures of a Punitive Column—Advance up the Euphrates—Battle of Nasiriyeh—Turkish Flight to Kut-el-Amara—First Battle of Kut—British Occupation of the Town—Advance towards Bagdad—Major-General Townshend—The Capital of the Parthian Kings—Battle of Ctesiphon—A Brilliant Victory—Enemy reinforced—General Townshend's Retreat to Kut-el-Amara.

WHILE our major campaigns both on the Western front and in Gallipoli settled down to the weary deadlock of trench warfare in the summer of 1915, the Persian Gulf Expedition kept cheerfully advancing and dealing the enemy a series of smashing blows in Mesopotamia. So successful was it in its early stages that there seemed to be something irresistible about this bold force of British and Indian troops, which, with invaluable units of the Royal Navy and Royal Indian Marine, moved so quietly and so efficiently up the Tigris and Euphrates, waging an amphibious war in the heart of Asiatic Turkey, and illustrating with extraordinary force the infinite possibilities of sea power. The capture of Amara, nearly half-way to Bagdad, to which point we had followed the fortunes of the expedition in our last chapter on

the subject,<sup>1</sup> had only been possible through the help of the river steamers brought for the purpose from Burma—the Irrawaddy Flotilla vessels, with which we were able to maintain communications between Amara, Kurnah, and Basra. These steamers and the motley armada of naval sloops, motor-boats, rafts, and local craft of every description had enabled our resourceful commanders to overcome the formidable problem of progress during the season of floods, when the melting of the snows in the far north round the head-streams of the Tigris inundated the whole country in which operations were taking place, save for an occasional hillock or sand-bank. Then came the intense malarious heat of the summer, converting Mesopotamia into one of the hottest, unhealthiest regions on earth, and taking toll of

<sup>1</sup> Volume III, pp. 113–22

British and Indians alike. All things considered, however—the fighting with the temperature at anything from 100° to 120° F. in the shade, the sudden sand-blasts, the eternal thirst, and “the infinite torment of flies”—the sickness among the troops during the summer months was not excessive.

far different tale had to be confessed after the heavier casualties towards the end of the year—there was ample hospital accommodation, together with a good supply of comforts for the sick; and during the unhealthy season it was found practicable to give some of the men a change in India.



The Campaign in Mesopotamia: the formal hoisting of the Union Flag at Kurnah

The Union Flag was hoisted by Bluejackets over the building on the right, but the flag is unfortunately obscured in the photograph by the palm tree. In the background is an Indian guard of honour presenting arms. Note the small Turkish gun on the left.

During June, 1915, after the capture of Amara, there were only twenty-seven cases and nine deaths from enteric. Every effort was made to minimize the effects of the scorching heat. The troops, as Mr. Chamberlain told the House of Commons towards the end of July, were supplied with spine-protectors and goggles, mosquito-nets and veils, ice, mineral waters, and fresh vegetables from Bombay. At this period—though a

Even so, the summer campaign necessarily involved great privations, with constant threats of surprise attacks by the enemy, and sniping and raiding at night by armed Arabs, who, while they had no love for the Turks, hated the Christian with the hatred of a poisoned mind. The Germans had seen to it that the “Holy War” had not been preached to deaf ears. Time alone could reassure the natives in regions where the Union Flag had



never been flown before, but where the conquerors began at once to substitute a government of law and order for the Turkish system of anarchy and oppression. British justice and energy worked wonders in the captured towns, but the desert regions remained a hotbed of treachery and fanaticism.

One of the British officers, in a letter published in the *Englishman* of Calcutta, gave a graphic account of the hardships of the desultory fighting against these unruly Arabs. He accompanied a punitive column under Major-General G. F. Gorringe, whose object was to round up some particularly troublesome tribesmen about 12 miles away. Throughout the long night the troops marched across the hot desert, chasing the Arabs, who were dotted about in small camps all over the country, doing fairly good execution among them, but arriving in the morning at the spot arranged for renewing their water-supply only to find the nullah virtually dry. Practically all their existing supplies having been finished during the night, they were now faced with the frightful torments of the worst horror of the desert—thirst. "By this time", writes the officer, "the sun was terribly fierce, and we were all absolutely 'done'." There was nothing for it but to march to the river, some 10 miles away. Matters at once grew serious, men falling down right and left from sheer exhaustion, to be picked up in ambulance and baggage carts. When 4 miles had been covered it was found impossible to go on; none of the men could drag another leg farther. Order

was accordingly given to pitch tents, while the General's staff and cavalry hurried on to send back water, the remainder resigning themselves to wait patiently until it arrived. The British officers set a fine example, helping and encouraging the men throughout, some even parting with their last drop of water to assist suffering Indian officers and other bad cases. "The sights I saw were awful; I hope I may never see them again," writes the officer already quoted, adding that he thought he was about to die:

"At last I volunteered to take all the water-bottles on mules and fetch water independently of the other lot. I felt desperate. This is how I nearly lost my life. We were 6 miles from the river, but they appeared like 50. How I got to the river I don't know. I just clung on to my saddle, and balanced myself the best way I could, with bottles dangling all round the saddle and my neck, with six mules following me. When I got to the river the horse plunged in, and I rolled off into the water. The cold water revived me a little. The charger and I stood side by side (I was up to my waist in water) and sucked away until I thought I was going to burst. But it was glorious; the water was very muddy, but what cared I! I then filled up all the bottles I had brought, had another long drink, and was off again back to our camp. I got back before the other water arrived, and I think just saved a lot of fellows. One British officer was in a very bad state, and if I had been half an hour later I think he would have gone. The misery in the camp was terrible."

It was under Major-General Gorringe, in the same torrid heat, that the successful advance up the Euphrates was made in July, 1915. When the Turks, as described in Volume III,

Chapter VII, p. 113, had been soundly beaten at Shaiba, their main forces hastily retired on Sukh-es-Sheyukh and Nasiriyeh, both on the Euphrates. Here they entrenched themselves in a

our position at Basra remained open to fresh attack by the Euphrates route. The only thing to do was to dislodge them, and the operations which followed were a repetition on an even



series of formidable positions covering those places as well as the entrance of the Kut-el-Hai Channel, which is the main line of communication across the desert from this point to the Tigris and Bagdad. So long as they were allowed to remain in those strongholds

more difficult scale of the Nile expedition to Khartoum under Lord Wolseley. Sometimes the troops had to travel by land, sometimes by water, through a network of marshes and canals, now dragging their extemporized gunboats overland, now travers-

ing mined reaches of the Euphrates or its offshoots; all in a shade temperature of something like  $113^{\circ}$ .

The command, as already stated, was entrusted to General Gorringe, whose route from Kurnah to Nasiriyeh by water followed the low-lying valley of the Old Euphrates Channel for 30 miles to Chahbaish; across the Hamar Lake for 15 miles to its western side; thence by the tortuous channel of the Hakika—some 50 yards wide and 15 miles long—until the main channel of the Euphrates was reached some 25 miles below his objective. From Kurnah to Chahbaish deep-draught vessels could go up the Old Euphrates, and on June 27, when the operations began, the Hamar Lake could be negotiated by all river steamers drawing less than 5 feet of water as far as the entrance to the Hakika Channel. Then, however, the troubles began in earnest. By the middle of July, as Sir John Nixon first pointed out in his dispatch of April 6, 1916, the channel across the lake held little more than 3 feet of water, and only the smallest steamers could cross. In many cases steamers were aground for days at a time, and the small tugs fitted as gunboats could only be taken across by removing guns, ammunition, armour-plating, fuel, and water, and using light-draught stern-wheelers to tow them. Later, troops and stores could only be transported in *bellums*—long, narrow, native craft, specially constructed for navigating the shallowest parts of the channels—which for some distances had to be dragged over mud and water by men.

Meantime a passage had to be forced from the lake into the Hakika Channel, the approach to which had been blocked by a solidly constructed *bund*, defended by mines and hostile armed launches above the obstruction. General Gorringe's force was preceded by gunboats under the command of Captain Nunn, R.N., who drove off the enemy's launches and occupied the *bund*, the demolition of which began at once. The following day was spent in making a channel 150 feet wide by 4 feet deep, the rush of water through which, says Sir John Nixon, created a rapid, almost a cataract, up which parties of men, on the 29th, succeeded in hauling up the naval craft. Not until July 4, however, were all the vessels and troops passed over the Hakika obstruction and established about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the junction of the Euphrates. Reconnaissances proved that the enemy, covering this entrance, had established himself with guns on the right of the Euphrates, commanding both banks of the Hakika, and the mine-field prepared about a mile down it.

General Gorringe attacked next morning (July 5) with the 30th Infantry Brigade under Major-General C. G. Mellis, V.C., the enemy opposing our advance consisting of 1000 Turkish regulars and 2000 Arabs, with four guns and two Thorneycroft launches armed with pom-poms. The 24th and 76th Punjabis advanced along the left bank, the 24th, accompanied by the 30th Mountain Battery, moving in *bellums* through the inundations. On the right bank were the 2/7th Gurkhas, supported by the 1/4th Hampshire Territorials. The advance was hotly con-



tested, and it was not until 1.20 p.m. that the Gurkhas and Hampshires, who greatly distinguished themselves, forced the enemy to hoist the white flag. On the left, where the stoutest opposition was offered, the 24th Punjabis had to carry their *bellums* across some 60 yards of dry land before they could cross the Euphrates to capture the enemy's position and battery. With

Sir John Nixon, "are numerous gardens, patches of cultivation, and several small villages within walled enclosures. On the left bank belts of date palms, with an occasional fringe of willow-trees, are the prevailing features. On the right bank the country is more open. During July, except for a belt of dry ground along the river-banks a few hundred yards wide, on either



The British Advance up the Tigris: flat-bottomed river craft moored at Amara

the clearance of the right bank our naval craft were soon busily engaged in mine-sweeping, one of the captured Turkish officers lending valuable help by indicating the position of the submerged mines. By nine o'clock that night the channel was clear; the ships came up, and the victorious troops, who had bagged 130 prisoners and four guns at a cost of 26 killed and 85 wounded, were taken on board for the passage up the Euphrates.

Above its junction with the Hakika the river has an average width of 200 yards. "Along its banks", writes

side the country was completely under water. Numerous irrigation channels intersect this belt of dry land at right angles to the river, presenting a series of obstacles to an advance. Such was the nature of the country where the Turks offered their main opposition to our advance on Nasiriyeh."

The second phase of the preliminary operations began on the morning of July 6, when Captain Nunn, with two gunboats, turned the enemy out of Sukh-es-Sheyukh. The whole flotilla thereupon continued its exciting passage up the Euphrates, General

Gorringe eventually establishing his force some 2 miles below the enemy's advanced positions. The troops dug themselves in on both banks, and gradually extended their entrenchments nearer and nearer to the enemy, who had established himself in a series of earthworks astride the river, about 5 miles below Nasiriyeh, with both flanks securely resting on marshes. It was a strong, well-chosen position, with broad deep channels in front difficult to turn or assault. The left bank was fringed by a narrow belt of palms, but the right bank, on which, by the night of the 13th-14th we had secured an entrenched position within 400 yards of the enemy, was devoid of cover. On the night on which the preliminary advance was made on the right a gallant attempt was made on the left bank by the 24th Punjabis, under Lieutenant-Colonel Climo, to capture some sand-hills behind the enemy's right flank, but here the troops encountered unexpected opposition, and, being attacked in rear by Arab tribesmen, were forced to withdraw, with considerable loss. Four guns of the 30th Mountain Battery, under Captain E. J. Nixon, are mentioned for rendering invaluable support while covering the withdrawal.

Thenceforward, until the night of July 23-24, the time was occupied by General Gorringe in completing his plans for the decisive attack, the enemy apparently preferring to await the onslaught of British and Indian troops rather than forestall it with an advance of their own. It was decided to deliver the main assault with the 12th Infantry Brigade on the left,

and the 30th Infantry Brigade on the right bank. The grand assault took place on Saturday, July 24, beginning at 4.30 a.m. with an hour's bombardment of the enemy's first-line trenches by howitzer, field-, and mountain-guns. There were lines upon lines of Turkish entrenchments, many of them roofed with matting as some protection during the day from the scorching sun, and extending a mile on each side of the river. When the bombardment ceased and the infantry advanced to complete the work of the guns, they dashed along these covered trenches much as the Australians did just a fortnight later by the roofed-in earthworks of Lone Pine plateau in Gallipoli, thrusting their bayonets down and receiving in turn a fierce fusillade from below. The Nasiriyeh trenches, however, were not bayonet-proof, as were those solidly protected trenches captured by the Anzacs, and the fight for the first line, in spite of a most stubborn resistance, was soon over. The 2nd Royal West Kents covered themselves with glory in a brilliant attack through the date groves on the left bank, advancing as if on parade, in spite of heavy casualties, and greatly facilitating the capture of the place. The spirit of all the troops never flagged in spite of the trying heat; "and in the assault of the entrenchments which the Turks thought impregnable", to quote from Sir John Nixon's dispatch, "British and Indian soldiers displayed a gallantry and devotion to duty worthy of the highest traditions of the service".

By noon the main position had been captured, notwithstanding the

desperate defence of the Turks, who clung to their trenches to the last, losing here in killed alone some 500 of their officers and men. Falling back to their final line of defence they were allowed little rest, Captain Nunn, in the small stern-wheeler called the *Shushan*, joining in the fray by running alongside hostile trenches on the river

well as to the courageous preliminary work of the Royal Flying Corps, as the Commander-in-Chief freely admits, that these amphibious operations were brought to a successful conclusion.

By 6.30 p.m. the demoralized Turks were in full retreat across the marshes, the victorious troops bivouacking on the position they had won. On the



Desert Warfare in Mesopotamia: British guns in position

Photo. Underwood & Underwood

bank and engaging them at close range. Earlier in the day, it should be added, the gunboat *Sumana*, carrying building materials, had pluckily fought her way, under a heavy fire, to the entrance to the Mejmineh Canal, where the 17th Company Sappers and Miners, supported by the gunboats, threw a bridge across. It was largely due to the gallant and enthusiastic co-operation of the officers and men of the Royal Navy under the command of Captain Nunn, as

following (Sunday) morning, July 25, the expeditionary force entered Nasiriyeh unopposed, and the Union Flag was hoisted with a salute of twenty-one guns. The enemy's casualties in killed, wounded, and prisoners amounted approximately to 2500, the prisoners including 41 officers and 690 men, of whom some 200 were wounded. The captures of arms and material included 1 40-pounder gun, 12 field- and 2 mountain-guns, and several machine-guns, together with 1000 rounds of



artillery and 300,000 rounds of small-arm ammunition. Our casualties numbered 564, as follows: British officers: killed, 5; wounded, 20. Other ranks: killed, 47; wounded, 143; missing, 30. Indian officers: killed, 4; wounded, 7. Other ranks: killed, 45; wounded, 257; missing, 6.

Defeated and disorganized, the Turks fled to Kut-el-Amara on the Tigris, and prepared to make another stand there against the further advance of the invaders. Kut, accordingly, became Sir John Nixon's next objective, for which purpose, as soon as Nasiriyeh had been secured, he began to transfer the troops towards Amara on the Tigris. It was impossible to advance by way of the Kut-el-Hai, as that route ceases to be navigable for the second half of the year, the Tigris then remaining the only waterway to Kut. The transfer of troops from the Euphrates to the Tigris was inevitably slow, owing to the difficulties of crossing the shallow Hamar Lake during the low-water season; but the concentration for the further advance was begun at the beginning of August, when a detachment of troops, accompanied by a naval flotilla, occupied Ali-Gherbi, and started organizing it as the base camp. Here, by September 12, 1915, the 6th Division was fully concentrated under Major-General Townshend, who on June 3 had succeeded Lieutenant-General Barrett—invalided to India. The advance continued thence by route-march along the river bank, accompanied, as always, by the indispensable naval flotilla. Sir Mark Sykes, M.P., who visited what he called the Cinderella of Campaigns

at this period, wrote an amusing account of the strange collection of ships flying the White or Blue Ensign on the Tigris.

"There are paddle-steamers which once plied with passengers, and now waddle along with a barge on either side, one perhaps containing a portable wireless station and the other bullocks for heavy guns ashore; there are once respectable tugs which stagger along under a weight of boiler-plating, and are armed with guns of varying calibre; there is a launch which pants indignantly between batteries of 4.7's, looking like a sardine between two cigarette boxes; there is a steamer with a Christmas-tree growing amidships, in the branches of which its officers fondly imagine they are invisible to friend or foe. There is also a ship which is said to have started life as an aeroplane in Singapore, shed its wings but kept its aerial propeller, took to water, and became a hospital; its progress is attended by a sustained series of detonations which serves it as an escort among the Arabs, who attribute its methods of progress to Iblis (Lucifer) alone. And this fleet is the cavalry screen, advance-guard, rear-guard, flank-guard, railway, general head-quarters, heavy artillery, line of communication, supply-depot, police force, field ambulance, aerial hangar, and base of supply of the Mesopotamian Expedition."<sup>1</sup>

With the aeroplanes and the cauldron-shaped gufars met on the Tigris above Amara—identical with the boats which carried merchandise from Nineveh to Babylon long before Herodotus wrote of them as "sound as bucklers"—our miscellaneous fleet could boast of being accompanied by the newest as well as the oldest craft in the world.

Supported by this motley but indispensable fleet, the attack was not delivered until everything was abso-

<sup>1</sup> *Daily Telegraph*, November 22, 1915.

lutely ready, and then, as at Nasiriyeh, the whole affair went like clockwork. The Turkish defences, as before, were of the most elaborate and up-to-date system, obviously planned under German supervision.

Sunken dhows and barges interlaced with wire blocked the passage of the Tigris and proved a most formidable obstruction, the approach being also protected by cunningly concealed guns on the river banks. A vast network of communication-trenches on the main position extended for miles. Blind ditches were thickly sown with barbed wire. Ranges were marked by flags. No detail, indeed, had been overlooked, the defences being completed by an elaborate system of observation and contact mines. A number of these mines were exploded by our engineers without accident, but severe casualties were caused by others during the action. The garrison, under Nur-eddin Pasha, consisted of six squadrons of cavalry, 26 guns, and the 35th and 38th infantry regiments, with other formations aggregating some four extra battalions, the total force being estimated at from 7000 to 8000 regular troops, assisted by a considerable number of tribesmen.

The battle began while the eyes of the world were turned on the titanic struggle on the Western Front. It was on the very day that the Guards Division went into action at Loos that the entrenchments of the Turks on both banks of the Tigris, 7 miles below Kut-el-Amara, were first attacked as a preliminary to the grand assault on the morrow—September 28, 1915. General Townshend had

advanced on the 26th to within 4 miles of the Turkish position. "His plan", explained Sir John Nixon, who pays a high tribute to the officer commanding for the ability and generalship displayed throughout, "was to make a decisive attack on the left bank by enveloping the Turkish left with his main force, but in order to deceive the enemy as to the direction of the real attack, preliminary dispositions and preparatory attacks were made with the object of inducing the Turks to expect the principal attack on the right bank." These demonstrations had taken place on the 27th, when the main force, on the right bank, made a feint attack on the trenches south of the river, while the left-bank detachment entrenched itself within 3000 yards of the enemy's left centre, with our heavy guns moved into position in its rear. Then, under cover of night, Brigadier-General Delamain, with his own and General Hoghton's Brigade, slipped across the river from the right bank by means of a boat bridge which had been constructed for the purpose, and deployed opposite the enemy's left flank.

Dawn came, and with it the surprise assault of General Delamain with the 16th and 17th Infantry Brigades, while the 18th Infantry Brigade, under Major-General Fry, made a pinning attack with its left on the line of the river. After four hours fierce opposition General Delamain's force, advancing in two columns—one directed frontally against the enemy's flank entrenchments, while the other swept round and attacked in rear—and protected on his right flank by

armoured motor-cars and the Cavalry Brigade, captured the redoubt and trenches on the Turks' extreme left, inflicting heavy losses and taking 135 prisoners. Still contesting every yard of ground the enemy made repeated counter-attacks, but after four more hours of stubborn fighting the whole of the northern part of the position was in our hands. Following a brief but much-needed rest, General Delamain then moved his force southwards, with the object of assisting the 18th Brigade by attacking the enemy opposed to it in the rear. Meantime, however, strong forces of Turkish reinforcements were seen approaching from the south-west in the direction of the bridge, and General Delamain, immediately changing his objective, attacked them instead, supported by his guns firing at a range of 1700 yards.

"The sight of the approaching enemy and the prospect of getting at him in the open with the bayonet", writes Sir John Nixon, "put new life into our infantry, who were suffering from weariness and exhaustion after their long and trying exertions under the tropical sun. For the time thirst and fatigue were forgotten. The attack was made in a most gallant manner with great dash. The enemy were routed with one magnificent rush, which captured four guns and inflicted heavy losses on the Turks. The enemy fought stubbornly, and were saved from complete destruction by the approach of night."

Brigadier-General Delamain's leadership throughout the battle was justly described by Sir John Nixon as admirable. He "showed himself to be a resolute and resourceful commander". The scene of his decisive victory,

which robbed the Turks of their last hope of saving Kut-el-Amara, was about 2 miles from the river; and here, though sorely in need of water, for the brackish water of the marshes was undrinkable, his parched and exhausted force bivouacked for the night. Both men and horses were suffering severely from thirst. It was not until the following morning, when the column returned to the river, that the animals tasted their first water for forty hours. With this rout of the reserves the whole Turkish defence crumpled up, the main force evacuating the remaining trenches under cover of darkness, and abandoning the town to the invaders.

Throughout the operations the work of the Royal Navy had fully maintained its high standard of efficiency, resourcefulness, and courage. To the navy's credit stands the bravest act



General W. S. Delamain, C.B., D.S.O.  
(From a photograph by Elliott & Fry)





General Fry, who commanded one of the Brigades at the Capture of Nasiriyeh and Kut-el-Amara  
(From a photograph by Elliott & Fry)

recorded on that eventful day at Kut. It occurred late in the evening, when the naval flotilla, which had co-operated with the land forces throughout the battle from positions on the river, advanced upstream in a fearless effort to force a passage through the boom obstruction. As the flotilla advanced, led by the *Comet*, under Lieutenant-Commander E. C. Cookson, R.N., acting senior naval officer, the ships had to run the gauntlet of a terrific fire from both banks at close range. The *Comet* rammed the boom, but the barges forming the obstruction were held together by a wire hawser, which withstood the shock. Without a moment's hesitation Lieutenant-Commander Cookson leapt alone from his vessel on to the boom, under a storm of bullets, in a magnificent

attempt to cut the cable. He was shot dead in the act, but not before he had earned the posthumous honour of the Victoria Cross.<sup>1</sup>

All the enemy's defences were found unoccupied on the following morning, while the flying officers—to whose courage and devotion throughout the operations Sir John Nixon again pays tribute, "the remarkable skill and powers of observation displayed by Flight-Commander Major H. L. Reilly", being specially mentioned—reported the Turks in orderly retreat along the banks of the Tigris. A pursuit was at once organized, troops being moved up in ships preceded by four weak cavalry squadrons. Unfortunately, the difficulties of navigation, due to the ever-shifting shallows of the river, so delayed the flotilla that it never came within striking distance of the retreating foe. The cavalry overtook them on October 1, but, as the Turks were in overwhelming force, and covered by a strong rear-guard with infantry and guns, it could do nothing without the support of the river column.

With the capture of Kut-el-Amara, however, the expulsion of the Turkish troops from the Basrah Vilayet had been completed. They had lost in this last battle some 4000 men in casualties, including 1153 prisoners, and we had also taken fourteen guns, besides a

<sup>1</sup> The D.S.C. was awarded to Surgeon Dermot Loughlin, R.N., for bravery in attending the wounded on board the *Comet* under heavy fire, and to Engineer Thomas Kerr, Royal Indian Marine, who assisted with the wounded, and also kept the Lascar engine-room complement in excellent order during the engagement.

Sub-Lieutenant L. C. P. Tudway, R.N., also received the D.S.C. for his gallant services while in command of the armed launch *Sumana* on the same occasion.

quantity of rifles, ammunition, and stores. Of our own casualties, amounting all told to 1233, a large proportion were only slightly wounded cases.

Kut, the day after its occupation, as Sir Mark Sykes remarked in the account already referred to, was as Kut of the day before, with the vital differ-

have carried a wonderful load through this campaign; they have borne heat, vermin, mosquitoes, fever, double duty, heavy casualties in the field; sunstroke, heatstroke, malaria, and typhoid have exacted a dismal toll, and anyone who counts the casualties in the various actions and compares them with the numbers engaged will perceive that the fighting has in Mesopotamia been as



Kut-el-Amara: view from the River Tigris

ence, however, that the Turks had gone and the British soldier and his brother the Sepoy had taken his place. The native did not seek safety in flight as from a ruthless destroyer. The bazaar was thronged within three hours of our occupation; the women went on with their work unafraid.

"So", writes Sir Mark Sykes, "the Arabs eye with uncomprehending looks the bronzed, peaceful British soldiers who talk so quietly to one another, and who walk about the streets not with the swagger of conquest, but with the staid assurance of the City man returning from business. These British soldiers, so clean and so cheerful,

severe, if not as persistent, as anywhere, in the war. If the British soldier leads, the Sepoy has not been slow to follow; and to see the wounded Indian soldier stiffen himself on his stretcher and sit up to salute an unknown British officer gives one a glimpse of that spirit of loyalty, pride, and glory in the profession of arms that no windy intriguer can dispel and years of patient justice and devotion of forgotten generations of Englishmen have evoked."

As in the earlier fighting, the 2nd Dorsets, 2nd Norfolks, and 1st Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry, who had borne the heat and burden of the campaign since the first landing in the Persian Gulf, shared many of the

honours for their gallantry in this fresh triumph. The West Kents attached to the Maxim Battery, and employed on the machine-guns of H.M.S. *Comet*, during the action in which Lieutenant-Commander Cookson won the Victoria Cross, also greatly distinguished themselves, as did the artillery, 22nd Company of Sappers and Miners, and many of the Indian troops, the 117th Mahrattas in particular being referred to for their fearless courage in attacking the Turkish trenches at the point of the bayonet.

Kut, which now became the head of our long line of communication, had brought the British within some 220 miles of Bagdad by the tortuous path of the Tigris, but less than 100 miles as the crow flies. The march of events in the world-wide war had emphasized the need at this time of dealing the Turks and their German masters a decisive blow in a campaign which, like the tragedy in Gallipoli, had gradually grown from a mere side-show into one of the vital theatres of operations. Following up the set-back to the Allies' cause in Gallipoli, the Germans were leaving no stone unturned to force Persia into the conflict on the side of the Central Powers and against the Entente. Obviously the early capture of historic Bagdad—still the most famous city of the Moslem East, though no longer the centre of the intellectual life of the Moslem world as in the golden days of Haroun Al-Raschid—would be a master-stroke, not only from the military point of view, but also from the political standpoint. It was a daring venture, and had it succeeded would have been acclaimed

as one of the finest feats of arms in history. Whether it was a fair risk no one can say without full knowledge of all the information available at the time. The fact remains that it was decided to make the attempt. The result, as it happened, was disastrous, and the scanty information doled out to the public throughout the campaign not unnaturally led to certain hasty conclusions at home that the advance on Bagdad was a rash military adventure, perhaps undertaken by the general in command of it on his own initiative and not properly thought out, perhaps not even fully authorized. In due course it was explained in Parliament that the operations throughout had been considered and approved of by the War Council, and the advance made and planned on the advice of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir John Nixon, whose brilliant series of successes in the early phases of the expedition had earned the congratulations of the King and the confidence of the country.

The command fell to Major-General C. V. F. Townshend, who had just crowned his record of distinguished services by the victory at Kut. A grandson of the Marquess Townshend who succeeded Wolfe after the death of that hero at Quebec, and heir-presumptive to the sixth Marquess, Major-General Townshend had served through at least half a dozen campaigns before the Mesopotamian war, and enjoyed the highest reputation among his superior officers, as well as the whole-hearted devotion of his men. He had received the C.B. for his gallant defence of Chitral Fort when the Political Officer, Sir George



## The Great World War

Robertson, was besieged there in 1895, and the D.S.O. for his services in the Nile Expedition of 1898.

It is said that the advance on Bagdad with the forces at his disposal was ordered against his own judgment and advice, but if so the Government apparently was ignorant of his views. In any case the decision rested with the higher command.

"The first proposal to advance on Bagdad after the battle of Kut-el-Amara", declared Mr. Chamberlain in the House of Commons on April 17, 1916, "was made neither by the Government of India nor by His Majesty's Government, but by the General Commanding-in-Chief in Mesopotamia. General Townshend was under the command of Sir John Nixon, and did not communicate with either the Government of India or with His Majesty's Government."

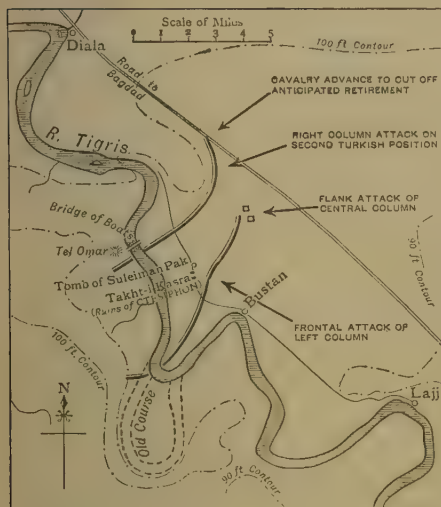
It was known that Nur-ed-din Pasha had been reinforced since his defeat at Kut, and that other new troops were already on their way to Bagdad from the north. The object of the early advance apparently was to crush Nur-ed-din before all these reinforcements reached him, and the British and Indian force set apart for the purpose, in the words of Lord Crewe in the House of Lords in the following December, "was by universal competent military opinion considered to be sufficient for it". Though consisting nominally of a single division, it was declared to be considerably larger than this designation implied, including the additional troops, both infantry and cavalry, which the authorities deemed sufficient to bring it up to the strength necessary for its task.

The scorching heat of the summer

months had given place to cooler weather when the expedition set out on its great enterprise from Kut-el-Amara. The November nights, indeed, brought the thermometer down to freezing-point, and the cold was all too keenly felt by the sorely tried troops, who, British and Indian alike, had been baked by the burning sun, and worn with constant work and fighting. No praise is too high for the cheerfulness of all ranks as they marched steadily on to another great battle, sweeping the enemy from his minor entrenchments between Kut and Ctesiphon, and facing heavy odds at the latter place with supreme courage. All the operations above Kut were carried out by land, over monotonous scrub-covered ground as flat as the region to the south, but higher



Major-General C. V. F. Townshend, C.B., D.S.O.  
(From a photograph by Swaine)



The Battle of Ctesiphon: Map showing approximately the two main Turkish positions, and the attack on General Townshend's troops on the morning of November 22, 1915

than the normal level of the river. Supporting the army came the flotilla of miscellaneous craft with supplies and material of every description. The boats followed the eccentric meanderings of the Tigris with difficulty where the river spread out sometimes to a width of 500 yards, increasing in shallowness as it broadened out, and shifting its channel with exasperating irregularity.

No serious encounter interfered with the march of General Townshend's troops before they faced the main Turkish force at Ctesiphon—little more than 18 miles from Bagdad—where the magnificent ruin of the Takht-i-Kasra, the "Throne of Chosroes", stood out as a conspicuous but lonely landmark, silently attesting the former splendours of the capital of the Parthian kings. Close at hand stood the tomb of Mohammed's barber, Suleiman Pak.

Ill luck had dogged the footsteps of the expedition from the first, for it was apparently not definitely embarked on its great adventure until some five or six weeks after the victory at Kut. This season, too, the Tigris was abnormally low, and fatal delays were caused by the increasing difficulties of navigation. Azizie, only 45 miles from Bagdad by road, but over 100 by river, had been occupied by General Townshend's advanced column as early as October 13, a Turkish brigade barring further progress until forced to retire by a wide turning movement threatening its rear. Meantime reinforcements had been arriving, and the main advance was ready to begin, but all these delays—chiefly due to the difficulties of navigation—had given the enemy time to increase his numbers until the army at Ctesiphon and Bagdad had grown to the strength of four divisions. It was not until the dawn of Monday morning, November 22, that General Townshend's army, having occupied Zeur on the 19th and Lajj on the following day, was ready for the great attack. A night march on the Sunday had at length brought it within striking distance of Ctesiphon, and the enemy, whose elaborate defences stretched out on both sides of the river, and extended back for miles. The whole battle-field was as flat as a table, even the soil thrown up from the deep, narrow trenches having been removed by the Turks to prevent any interference with the murderous fire which was to sweep every yard of the ground at the critical moment. All that the attackers could see as they faced those positions that Monday morning, after their long



Spoils of War in Mesopotamia: Turkish Mines—floating or anchored—removed from the Tigris

night march, was a stout, forbidding hedge of wire entanglements in front of the whole front line of trenches, with the ruins of the ancient Parthian palace behind. Germany, it should be added, was here taught a lesson in *Kultur* by the strict injunctions given to the British gunners to spare this historic monument.

General Townshend's plan was to attack in three columns, with the cavalry sweeping round on the right flank to cut off the expected retirement of the reserves in the enemy's second line. The battle opened at dawn with a lively fire from our gunboats on the Turkish positions near the river bank, the Field Artillery then joining in with a bombardment of the enemy's trenches—as near as they could judge them—in front of the ancient ruins. Not a sign of life was

visible on the enemy's side, not a shot fired until the attacking infantry reached within range; and then from the whole line of entrenchments burst forth a sudden storm of fire which showed that the battle had begun in earnest.

It needed no ordinary courage to face that galling fire without so much as a single inch of cover, and with the wire entanglements still guarding the Turks' strongly held trenches. No description, as one of our officers said, could do justice to the gallantry of the men, who not only faced this ordeal unflinchingly, but also won their way through the entrenchments, and finally, by 1.30, had mastered the whole of the first Turkish line. The Dorsets, Mahrattas, and 24th Punjab Infantry again helped to bear the brunt of the fight at this point, forming part of the central columns under General Dela-



main, who, with his staff and a handful of men, held one of the hottest corners of the battle-field. Having captured the first line, the left and centre columns proceeded to the assistance of the right column, which was desperately engaged against vastly superior numbers in its flank attack on the second line about a mile in rear. Here the Turks, instead of retiring according to precedent, and the plan arranged for our cavalry, obstinately refused to budge, and counter-attacked with a force which outnumbered our troops by more than two to one. Part of the second line fell into our hands as well as the whole of the first position, but the fierce struggle raged throughout the day with varying fortunes. "Twelve Turkish guns were captured," wrote the officer already referred to, in a letter printed in the *Times*, "taken again by the enemy, recaptured again

by us, and retaken finally from us<sup>1</sup>; and so the fighting went on until a merciful darkness fell, and as if by mutual agreement the fire of both sides, too weary for more, died away."

That night General Townshend's force and General Head-quarters bivouacked on the captured ground, reorganizing the troops and removing their wounded and prisoners. Altogether some 1300 Turks were taken, as well as large quantities of arms and equipment. Our losses on this day were calculated at 2000 killed and wounded, but the piles of dead in the Turkish trenches showed that the enemy's total casualties must have greatly exceeded our own. These, however, were at

<sup>1</sup> Sir John Nixon, in his dispatch issued by the War Office on May 10, 1916, gives the number of these guns as 8. They had to be abandoned finally, he explains, "as shortly before nightfall it was found necessary, owing to diminished numbers, to order the withdrawal of our troops from the forward positions to which they had penetrated back to the first position".



The Advance towards Bagdad: view from an aeroplane of a British bridge of boats and the flooded banks of the Tigris—with British gunboat in the distance

once made good by the arrival of reinforcements from Bagdad, with the result that on the following night, after a day of artillery duelling, he returned to the attack in vastly superior numbers, flinging two fresh divisions no fewer than three times against our parched and weary but still invincible troops, who had to go thirty-six hours, it is recorded, without refilling water-bottles. All through that night the Turks failed to break our heroic lines, and suffered fearful losses, but only at a heavy cost to our own diminishing strength. On the 24th General Townshend evacuated his wounded and prisoners from Ctesiphon to Lajj and consolidated his main position on the battle-field, though want of water necessitated the withdrawal of his right flank nearer the river, the defeated Turks meantime retreating 9 or 10 miles to re-form at Dialah, about midway between Ctesiphon and Bagdad. So roughly had the enemy been handled that his 45th Division, which had held the front trenches, was practically wiped out. With the retreat of the enemy to Dialah no doubt seemed to remain of the completeness of a victory the first news of which raised the highest hopes throughout the British Empire—hopes, alas! destined to be shattered when it became known that General Townshend, after all, had been obliged to retire. The enemy, it transpired, had received fresh reinforcements on the 25th, and was now seen advancing in several large columns, threatening the Indo-British force both in flank and rear.

It must have been a bitter moment for General Townshend and the whole of his gallant army when it was realized

that this hard-won victory, after a battle destined to rank among the greatest achievements of the Indian army, was doomed to end in retreat from lack of water, food, and reinforcements. Circumstances had most untowardly prevented them from anticipating the arrival of the new Turkish forces, the enemy thus proving incomparably stronger than had been anticipated, both in his numerical strength and his powerful armament of artillery. Our losses on the first day had grown considerably in the later fighting, amounting to 2500 in wounded alone. In view of the enemy's fresh advance in vastly superior force the only course was to withdraw and await our own reinforcements. For the time being, therefore, the troops who had so gallantly fought their way for twelve months through hundreds of miles of hostile country in one of the worst climates of the world had perforce to retrace their steps when within but a few miles of their goal. No charge whatever, declared Lord Crewe, in the debate on the subject in Parliament in the following month, could be brought against the leading of the troops, either in the higher commands or the commands in general. This and the splendid behaviour of all ranks were the very bright spots in this rather dark picture.

"General Townshend", to quote from the words of Lord Sydenham on the same occasion, "fought his action with the very greatest gallantry, and he fought against a force that must have been twice, and probably was three times as large as his own. He inflicted great loss upon that force, and captured and brought back about 1600 prisoners. That was a very fine feat of arms.

The comparatively small force which brought about that victory was largely composed of Indian troops who had been for more than a year from their homes, had endured the extreme stress of a summer in Mesopotamia, and fought at the end of a long expedition. No tribute was too strong to pay to those brave men. General Townshend, finding in front of him even further reinforcements of the enemy, was most wise in retiring as he had, and saved his force from great danger."

This gallant force, alas! was saved only to face the cruel ordeal of the long siege and final surrender of Kut-el-Amara. Conducting his orderly retreat with consummate skill General Townshend reached this strongly fortified position on December 3, 1915, but was almost immediately cut off by the overwhelming superiority of the enemy's forces.

F. A. M.

## CHAPTER XIV

### GERMAN COUNTER-ATTACKS AT LOOS

(October, 1915)

The Avenging Host—Enemy's Success in the Hohenzollern Redoubt—Death of Major-General Wing—The Great German Counter-attack of October 8—The Red Harvest of the Guns—Main Assault against the Guards' Division—Heroes of the Coldstreams—With the Grenadiers and Irish Guards at Hill 70—Death of the Irish Guards' Priest—The Fight round the Hohenzollern—Total British Losses in the Great Offensive—An Artilleryman's V.C.—British resume the Offensive—Heavy Losses of the North Midland Territorials—Their Gallant Fight for the Hohenzollern—Glory of the Sherwood Foresters—The Fighting near Hulluch—Struggle for the Quarries—Cold-blooded Shooting of British Wounded—Splendid Work of the Royal Engineers—Sir John French's Tribute to the Tunnelling Companies—A Chapter of Heroic Deeds.

IT was hardly likely that the Germans, failing to recover their lost ground at Loos by their hasty counter-attacks amid the tumult and confusion of our great offensive, would allow the initiative thus to pass into the Allies' hands without a supreme effort to retrieve the situation. Though the vast sum of French and British sacrifice had not received its full reward of a crowning victory in Artois it had profoundly disturbed the enemy's plans, and, with the greater success in Champagne, thrown his mighty war-machine out of gear. That the machine was finding it harder and harder to cope with the insistent

demands of the German Head-quarters Staff was indicated by Sir John French, who in the course of these operations reported that the enemy's reinforcements mustered in the neighbourhood of Hulluch were known to comprise a mixture of units hurriedly swept together from all directions, and comprising no fewer than 48 different battalions. This meant a grave disorganization of divisions and army corps behind the enemy's lines; and inspired a growing confidence among the Allies that with every succeeding blow, increasing tremendously as it must in its weight both of men and munitions, the machine would gradually



weaken in every bolt, until at long last it broke down altogether.

Fully conscious of this aggressively cheerful spirit of the Allies, but still believing implicitly in the instrument which admittedly had wrought wonders in the war as a monument of soulless organization and strength, the Germans prepared a counter-stroke in-



Major-General F. D. V. Wing, C.B., commanding the 12th Division of the New Army, killed on October 2, 1915  
(From a photograph by Gale & Polden)

tended both as a lesson to the Allies and a restorative to their own troops, whose *moral* had undoubtedly been roughly shaken. Determined to sweep back the British and French from the Loos and Hulluch salient—for the French Ninth Corps, it will be remembered, was now guarding the line round Loos from Grenay to the western slope of Hill 70, where it linked up with the British right—they mustered all their available reserves of men and guns from the Belgian base and Russian front, and concen-

trated for the coming stroke which at all costs was to retrieve the recent retreat.

The gathering of this avenging host was kept from our knowledge as long as possible by a constant succession of minor assaults against our new positions. The attacks across the open against our trenches between the Quarries and the Vermelles-Hulluch road, which were pressed with determination and preceded by heavy bombardment, were all repulsed with severe loss to the enemy, though farther to the north-west he succeeded on October 3 in recapturing for a time the greater part of the Hohenzollern Redoubt, the scene of the deadliest fighting since the beginning of the battle on September 25. On the day before this costly German success in the Redoubt Sir John French had to mourn the loss of another of his divisional commanders, the third since the Allied Offensive began—Major-General F. D. V. Wing, C.B., commanding the 12th (Eastern) Division of the New Army, who had previously been wounded in the Great War and mentioned in dispatches, being promoted major-general for distinguished service in the field.<sup>1</sup>

On the 3rd fell another gallant officer who had won high honour in the war—Captain Arthur Leigh-Bennett, of the 2nd Coldstream Guards. Some mention was made in an earlier chapter of the splendid courage which won the D.S.O. for Captain Leigh-Bennett at

<sup>1</sup> Major-General Wing had seen thirty-five years' service, having been gazetted lieutenant in the Royal Artillery in 1880. He fought through the South African campaign, commanding a mobile column during the last six months. Later, he became A.D.C. to Lord Roberts.

Cuinchy in the previous February. When he came to receive this decoration he had also earned the Military Cross, thus enjoying the rare distinction of being decorated with both honours by His Majesty on the same occasion. Mentioned in dispatches not less than eight times for repeated deeds of daring, he bore what seemed

attack, and bombarding our positions all along the line, we were steadily pushing our trenches forward north-east of Loos, between Hill 70 and Hulluch, gaining ground varying from 500 to 1000 yards in depth. "Our expectations in regard to a counter-attack", to quote from Sir John French's dispatch, "were fulfilled on



In the Hulluch Quarries before the Autumn Offensive of 1915: view showing the enemy in possession  
(Reproduced from a German photograph)

to be a charmed life until this fatal 3rd of October.

The Coldstreams, whose capture of the Chalk Pit north of Hill 70 on September 27 had not been forgotten, bore much of the brunt of the great German counter-attack on October 8. The assault was fully expected. Thanks to the vigilant eyes of our Royal Flying Corps the enemy had failed to deceive us as to his real intentions. While he was massing for the great

the afternoon of October 8." It followed a furious bombardment from all parts of the enemy's front, lasting nearly five hours, and increasing in intensity until nearly 4 p.m., when wave upon wave of German infantry in their favourite mass formation advanced along practically the whole line from Fosse 8 on the north to the right of the French 9th Corps on the south. According to Sir John French there were some twenty-eight bat-

talions in first line, with larger forces in support. As they crossed the open against our 1st Division and the Guards, marching four deep and shoulder to shoulder, they offered the finest target that our gunners and infantry had obtained since the carnage of Ypres. The French 75's on our right reaped one of their reddest harvests, while our own artillery, machine-guns, and rifles took fearful toll all along the line. Save at two points the Germans were everywhere repulsed with tremendous loss, some eight to ten thousand of their dead lying on the battle-field at the end of the day.

The main German effort, it subsequently transpired, was directed against the line Loos-Chalk Pit, while a subsidiary, but still prodigious, assault was delivered from the direction of the Hohenzollern Redoubt against the bulk of the Guards Division, now for the greater part disposed in this most fiercely debated region. Some eight to ten German battalions were directed at the same time against the French 9th Corps from Loos to Grenay, succeeding in making a small and unimportant lodgment on the Double Crassier, which had been carried by the London Territorials in the great attack of September 25. The French official estimate of the enemy's strength in his main assault on the Allies' front put it at no fewer than from 60,000 to 80,000 men.

For the attack on the Chalk Pit the enemy assembled behind some woods which lie from 300 to 500 yards off our new positions. "Between these woods and our line", reported Sir

John French three days later, "the attack was mown down by combined rifle, machine-gun, and artillery fire." The Coldstreams saved the situation on their part of the line only after a battle of giants in which the enemy, at the onset, in overpowering numbers, momentarily captured 200 yards of our trenches. Thereupon Lance-Sergeant Oliver Brooks, of the 3rd Battalion, led a party of bombers on his own initiative, and succeeded in regaining possession of the lost ground. "The signal bravery displayed by this non-commissioned officer, in the midst of a hail of bullets from the Germans," says the *Gazette* in recording his award of the Victoria Cross, "was of the very first order, and the complete success attained in a very dangerous undertaking was entirely due to his absolute fearlessness, presence of mind, and promptitude."

Lance-Sergeant Brooks, who had served throughout the campaign and passed unscathed, was the second soldier of the Coldstreams to win the Victoria Cross during the Great World War, the first being Corporal Dobson, of the 2nd Battalion, for valour on the Aisne just a year before. Six other men of the 3rd Battalion, who formed the bombing party, were awarded the D.C.M. for their bravery and resource in the same hand-to-hand struggle on October 8—Privates E. Anderson, A. Chillingworth, H. Londesbrough, H. Smith, A. Teasdale, and W. White. Springing forward at once when the trench on their left was captured they boldly faced their triumphant foes, and forced them back with their bombs, foot by foot, until they had



cleared the whole trench, although the invaders were at least ten times their own number. It was a deed worthy of those earlier Coldstreams who helped to hold Hougomont and bore the brunt of Inkerman.

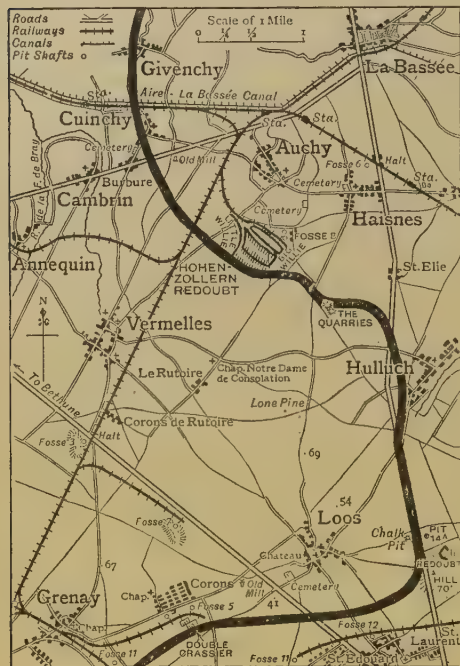
The 2nd Battalion withstood another mighty onrush on their front trench and sap-head in St. Elie Avenue. Apart from the barricade, practically the whole of the sap-head and a large section of the trench had been levelled to the ground after the four hours' preliminary bombardment. Two determined bomb attacks were made by the enemy in tremendous force, and each time he nearly gained a footing in the trench, only to be repelled at the critical moment, thanks in no small measure to the personal bravery of Captain H. C. Loyd, whose "skilful organization and inspiring example", to quote from the record in the *Gazette* of his subsequent award of the Military Cross, "were largely instrumental in bringing about the success of his company". Privates Andrews, Chisholm, Moore, and Vale won the D.C.M. on the same occasion, when great difficulty was experienced in getting bombs up to the barricade, where the Germans were storming their hardest. For one breathless moment the supply ran out, and the exultant Germans advanced beyond the barricade, and even on to the parapet of our trench. Quick as thought, and entirely on their own initiative, these gallant Coldstreams, having obtained more bombs, charged over the open ground towards the barricade, and, driving the enemy off with loss, regained it. That was the nearest the

Germans got to our trenches at this point, and they left the whole surrounding ground thickly strewn with their dead.

Meantime the Grenadiers and Irish Guards were suffering heavy losses in the fierce fighting round Hill 70. When, in the evening, the remnants of one of the battalions were at length driven out of their trenches, shattered by the preliminary bombardment and the incessant bombing which followed, some company bomb throwers of the 1st Irish Guards rushed forward, led by Private J. Regan and D. O'Brien, who, bombing down 100 feet of trench, killed many of the attacking Germans. Regan and O'Brien, both of whom received the D.C.M. for their gallant leadership, directed the men with the greatest courage and skill, and remained bombing all night, being relieved by the Scots Guards at 6 a.m. next morning.

It was about this period that the Irish Guards lost their "brave little priest", the Rev. John Gwynn, S.J., who had been appointed their chaplain at the outbreak of war, and had won the hearts of officers and men alike by his unfailing courage and devotion. Father Gwynn had been seriously wounded early in the year while ministering to some of the men in his charge, but had refused to return home. Now, amid the ferocious combat raging round Hill 70 he fell mortally wounded while piously engaged, undismayed by the storm of shrapnel and bullets, in giving the Last Sacrament to the dying. One Irish Guardsman described how he saw him, for the last time, kneeling by the side of

a wounded German soldier. "It was a scene to make you cry", he added. The death of Father Gwynn caused the deepest personal grief throughout the regiment. "He was a splendid fellow," said the officers to Mr. John Redmond, M.P., when he paid his visit to the front some weeks later,



Map showing approximately the Allies' Line round Loos and Hulluch after the great German counter-attack of October 8, 1915

"and had been a tower of strength and a continual tonic to his regiment."

While the violent battle was raging round Loos, the great counter-attack farther to the north, between Hulluch and the Quarries, was beaten off with frightful loss to the enemy. At this point our troops, following up the beaten enemy, secured a German

trench west of Cité St. Elie. Round the Hohenzollern, in the words of Sir John French's telegraphic dispatch, the Germans "only succeeded in penetrating our front line in the southern communication trench of the Redoubt", familiarly known as the "Big Willie" trench—and they were promptly driven out by our bombers. For his pluck and initiative in saving the situation Lieutenant Geoffrey G. Gunnis, of the 3rd Grenadier Guards, received the Military Cross. "He led his men with great dash, attacked the Germans in flank and rear, drove them into the open, inflicting heavy casualties among them", and recaptured the remainder of the position.

By midnight it was evident that the supreme counter-attack had proved a complete and costly failure. Though here and there the enemy had obtained a temporary footing by immense sacrifices of men, the day closed with the line held by the First Army identically the same as that before the assault began. His losses had been appalling, and incomparably greater than ours. To hide the truth from neutrals and their own people the German Head-quarters Staff described the battle in their communiqué on the following day as a strong British attack, which had failed with great losses!

It was down to this date that the official list of British casualties was brought from the beginning of the great offensive on September 25, as announced by the Under-Secretary for War in the House of Commons on January 5, 1916. The figures, which were as follows, included the casualties

among the Regular Army, the Territorial Force, the Overseas Contingents, and the Indian Native Force, covering the simultaneous operations at other parts of the British front, as well as the battle of Loos itself:—

## OFFICERS

Killed ... ..	773
Wounded ... ..	1,288
Missing ... ..	317

## OTHER RANKS

Killed ... ..	10,345
Wounded ... ..	38,095
Missing ... ..	8,848

## TOTAL CASUALTIES

Officers ... ..	2,378
Other ranks ... ..	57,288

The result of the German repulse on October 8 was in no small measure due to the effective work of our guns. It showed the capacity of the Artillery, as Sir John French remarked, to concentrate its fire promptly and effectively at a moment's notice for the defence of its front—a remark which introduced a well-deserved tribute on the Field-Marshal's part to the valuable services at all times of the observing officers and the men who worked with them:

“Carrying out their duties, as they do, in close proximity to the front line in observing stations, that are the special mark of the enemy's guns, they are constantly exposed to fire, and are compelled to carry on their work, involving the use of delicate instruments and the making of nice calculations, in circumstances of the greatest difficulty and danger. That they have never failed in their duties, and that they have suffered very heavy casualties in performing them, are to their lasting credit and honour.”

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It was to an artilleryman that fell the next Victoria Cross of the war, Sergeant John C. Raynes, of “A” Battery, 71st Brigade, R.F.A., winning it at Fosse 7 de Béthune on October 11, while his battery was being heavily bombarded by armour-piercing and gas shells. “Cease Fire” having been ordered, Sergeant Raynes faced the



Sergeant J. C. Raynes, of the Royal Field Artillery, who won the Victoria Cross for a series of splendid deeds on October 11–12, 1915

(From a photograph by Rosemont, Leeds)

torrent of enemy shell in order to assist Sergeant Ayres, who was lying wounded 40 yards away. He had just time to bandage him and return to his gun when it was again ordered into action.

“A few minutes later”, adds the *Gazette*, “‘Cease Fire’ was again ordered owing to the intensity of the enemy's fire, and Sergeant Raynes, calling on two gunners to help him—both of whom were killed shortly afterwards—went out and carried Sergeant



Ayres into a dug-out. A gas shell burst at the mouth of the dug-out, and Sergeant Raynes once more ran across the open, fetched his own smoke-helmet, put it on Sergeant Ayres, and then, himself badly gassed, staggered back to serve his gun."

On the following day, when a house in what some of Sir J. M. Barrie's admirers had called "Quality Street" was knocked down by a heavy shell, Sergeant Raynes again distinguished himself. He was one of eight men buried in the ruins, and was the first man rescued. Though wounded in the head and leg he insisted on remaining under heavy shell fire to assist in the rescue of his comrades. "Then, after having his wounds dressed, he reported himself immediately for duty with his battery, which was again being heavily shelled." Surely no finer record than this series of splendid deeds exists in all the glorious annals of the Victoria Cross.

Next day, after a comparative lull on the main battle-front between La Bassée and Loos, it was the turn of the British to resume the offensive, while the Germans, with insignificant success and further enormous losses, were counter-attacking the French on the Vimy heights. The new British advance was made, as on September 25, under cover of a cloud of smoke and gas, and after a bombardment in which hundreds of batteries blazed together in the afternoon until the signal came to charge. The Guards in the Hohenzollern area had been relieved on the previous night by the North Midland Division of Territorials, to whom fell the honour of the new attack on the famous Redoubt, practically the whole

of which had been recaptured by the Germans ten days before. Other troops pressed the fresh advance from the Hohenzollern to a point about 600 yards south-west of Hulluch. Round this comparatively restricted front was concentrated a battle which, like the initial advance on Loos on September 25, achieved a certain measure of success, but did not yield in the end all that had been hoped from it.

After a misty morning a bright afternoon found our troops waiting to spring to the attack, while the guns deluged the enemy's positions with shells, and clouds of smoke and gaseous vapours hid them from sight. The conditions were again, according to some accounts, not altogether satisfactory for our gas attack; and though our guns succeeded in smashing the maze of earthworks enclosed by the outermost trench of the Hohenzollern, practically the whole approach was still swept by the enemy's machine-guns. These took appalling toll as the Midland Territorials, when the order came to charge at this point of the battle-field, sprang from their trenches and swept through the smoke over much the same ground as on September 25.

On the right the Staffordshire Brigade was decimated by this awful fire. The North Staffs led the advance, supported by the South Staffs, and both regiments fought heroically in the face of fearful odds. A section of the main or "Big Willie" trench remained in our hands, and from this flank position some of the North Staffordshire bombers, with superb skill and daring, cleared 30 yards or so more, keeping a whole



Drawn by Ralph Cleaver

#### Bombs and Bayonets to the Fore: a daybreak charge on the British front

The bombers, supported by bayonets, used bombs of the rocket shape on this occasion carried in panniers, or canvas bags. The piece of webbing attached caused the bombs to land head downward and ensured explosion. The larger explosions on the left were caused by "hair-brush" bombs, so called from their shape.

horde of Germans at bay while other Staffordshire heroes built a new barricade behind. On the left, another brigade, including the Sherwood Foresters and the men of Lincoln and Leicester, broke right across the Hohenzollern in an impetuous charge which carried them into the Fosse trench at the back, some units apparently even crossing the little pit railway and penetrating into the desolate region beyond. This area, however, proved a veritable death-trap. The enemy had been strongly reinforced since the last battle, among others by some companies of the Prussian Guards, and the whole district round the slag heaps and battered mining buildings of Fosse 8 was honeycombed with defence works. There were deep dug-outs in and about the Redoubt still untouched by our fire, and packed with heavily armed bombers ready to send the attackers to destruction. Machine-guns, too, were hidden everywhere.

Small wonder that our gallant Territorials, after clinging to the advanced lines captured in this raging inferno until most of their officers had been killed, were forced to give ground, foot by foot, to make another stand in the "Little Willie" trench. Here it was that the Sherwood Foresters made a name for themselves which will live in the sanguinary history of the Hohenzollern Redoubt. Captain J. C. Warren, of the 7th (Robin Hood) Battalion, who had previously been brought to notice for gallant conduct in the war, succeeded, with a party of four men, in holding back the enemy at this point for three unforgettable hours. When at length the Germans took

the trench behind him, he withdrew across the open into the western face of the Redoubt, where he built and occupied a barrier. Here he personally helped in bombing back another strong attack, holding this trench for another fourteen hours, and thus earning the Military Cross. The same decoration was conferred upon Captain V. O. Robinson, of the 6th Sherwood Foresters—also mentioned before for conspicuous bravery—who went forward in support on the 13th, and was indefatigable in organizing the defence throughout the two ensuing days and nights. It was on the 15th that the 8th Sherwood Foresters, who suffered heavily, lost their commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel G. H. Fowler. On the previous day their losses had included two gallant brothers, Captain H. B. S. Handford, and Second-Lieutenant E. F. S. Handford, both of whom were killed in the same fight. In the unabating struggle of the 14th the highest honour of the Sherwood Foresters was attained when Captain C. G. Vickers of the Robin Hood Battalion—as expert with the bomb as his legendary hero was with the bow and quarter-staff—kept the Germans at bay during a most dangerous crisis, and won the Victoria Cross.

"When nearly all his men had been killed or wounded, and," says the *Gazette*, "with only two men available to hand him bombs, Captain Vickers held a barrier for some hours against heavy German bomb attacks from front and flank. Regardless of the fact that his own retreat would be cut off, he had ordered a second barrier to be built behind him in order to ensure the safety of the trench. Finally, he was severely wounded, but not before his magnificent



courage and determination had enabled the second barrier to be completed."

The Territorials of the 5th Leicesters also shared in the honours for this fierce battle for the "Little Willie" trench. Lieutenant C. H. F. Wollaston won the Military Cross on the 13th, when, although wounded in



Captain C. G. Vickers, of the Robin Hood Battalion, Sherwood Foresters, who won the Victoria Cross in the Hohenzollern on October 14, 1915

the back and arm while exposing himself freely in order to restore confidence among men who had become scattered, he organized a bombing party along this ghastly alley of death, and held up the enemy for some hours until his bombs were exhausted. "He continued to reorganize the men in the front line until he became weak, and was ordered to the dressing-station by a senior officer." Captain M. H. Barton, attached to the 5th Leicesters from the Royal Army Medical Corps,

also earned the Military Cross on this occasion for his fearless courage and devotion in tending and bringing in wounded under fire. One of the D.C.M.'s awarded to the 5th Leicesters fell to Private W. H. Hallam, who, with one companion only, held up the enemy for many hours. "They were both utterly exhausted, but volunteered to keep the enemy at bay until the trench had been blocked, which was eventually successfully done." Corporal C. Leadbeater, of the 1st/5th Lincolnshires, added a clasp to his Distinguished Conduct Medal, awarded for conspicuous gallantry on another occasion. On September 13 he played a lion's part in building the barricade when the bombers were unable to advance farther along the North Face, and after spending the night in bombing, acted on the following day as stretcher-bearer, "regardless of all personal danger". Obviously they knew how to fight, these Midland Terriers, deft craftsmen of peace before the war—bootmakers of Leicester and Northampton, lace-workers of Nottingham, potters of the Five Towns, artisans and tradesmen of Lincolnshire's ancient capital, and sturdy yeomen of Monmouthshire among them—now "doing their bit" in the horrible business of war as though to the manner born.

While the battle was raging for "Little Willie" on the left, the 4th Leicesters were winning their laurels on the right flank of the Hohenzollern. One of their D.C.M.'s was Private F. R. Ratcliffe, who was the first man of his platoon to reach the Redoubt in the initial onset. "Single-handed he attacked several of the enemy, and

with the greatest coolness and gallantry led his platoon until he fell wounded." Private A. Johns, who was similarly decorated, was advancing with a party of five men when he encountered some ten Germans on the right flank, and cleared the lot with bombs. "He then", to quote from the *Gazette*, "proceeded across the

regardless of the torrent of shell and machine-gun fire. This gallant work he continued, notwithstanding his own injury, until overcome by sheer exhaustion.

All this time the 5th South Staffordshires were maintaining their precarious foothold in the "Big Willie" in the face of the utmost efforts of the Germans



The Track of War on the Western Front: panorama—continued on the next page—of the wrecked village of Lizerne

open under heavy machine-gun fire to the east face, and with bombs held back every attack while a party of the Monmouthshire Regiment dug themselves in." It was here that Corporal J. Wreford, of the 1st Monmouthshires, won his D.C.M. The Monmouths, who arrived in the nick of time to strengthen the attacking force, lost heavily, and Corporal Wreford, although himself wounded, carried several wounded men to the dressing-station

to wrest it from their grasp. Second-Lieutenant Hubert Hawkes received the Military Cross for his splendid work in repelling their attacks at this point, directing his bombing parties with such ability and coolness as to prevent the enemy from establishing himself in our portion of the trench. The gallant share of the 4th Lincolnshires, who, like other of the regiments engaged, lost most of their officers, may be estimated from the deed which won

the D.C.M. for Corporal C. W. Jackson, after he had organized bombing parties to hold back the Germans in their counter-attack. "At nightfall", states the *Gazette*, "he collected a party of six men and held the enemy until dawn, by which time both he and all his party had been either killed or wounded." Company Sergeant-Major

was relieved by fresh troops he stoutly refused to relinquish his post.

The official story of another award—that of the D.C.M. to Sergeant F. Winters, of the 5th Battalion (Pioneers) Northamptonshire Regiment—affords a vivid glimpse of the species of bloodthirsty warfare into which this never-ending battle for the Hohen-



The Track of War on the Western Front: panorama—continued from the opposite page—of the wrecked village of Lizerne

Peasgood, of the same fine battalion, faced an even longer ordeal when in charge of some twenty men in this part of the Redoubt, holding his position from 3 p.m. on the 13th, throughout the night—though hit in the chest by a piece of shrapnel during the afternoon—until after midday on the 14th. That afternoon he was found still holding on, although his party had been reduced to six men, and even when the rest of the battalion

zollern had now developed. Sergeant Winters had been detailed with eight men to block one of the communication trenches.

"The party rushed up the trench for 90 yards in rear of a bombing party of another battalion. A strong party of enemy bombers was met, who drove in our bombing party. Sergeant Winters, with great bravery, promptly engaged the enemy, drove them back, and successfully blocked the trench, losing three men killed. Later in the day he again successfully blocked



another communication trench under a heavy fire. On the evening of October 15 he was again conspicuous in collecting parties to repair a trench which was being heavily shelled, and in digging out dead and wounded men."

It was on the 15th that the sorely-tried North Midland Territorials were relieved by the 2nd Guards Brigade. While the position was being taken over the enemy delivered a strong counter-attack, but this was splendidly repulsed by the Sherwood Foresters. The net result of the Midland Territorials' assault on the Hohenzollern was to leave us, in spite of all the strenuous efforts of the enemy, firmly established in the key to the position, the main or "Big Willie" trench. The troops on the right of the Midland Territorials had meantime gained about 1000 yards of German trenches just south and west of Hulluch, but were unable to maintain their hold owing to the enemy's concentrated shell fire. South-west of St. Elie, however, we not only captured but held the enemy's trenches behind the Vermelles-Hulluch road and the south-western edge of the Quarries, as well as a trench on the south-western face of the Quarries themselves. Some of the most useful artillery work in this resumed attack on the 13th was due to the dauntless pluck of Captain H. N. Fairbank, of the 117th Battery, R.F.A., who took his battery forward to within decisive range near Hulluch in a most exposed position, where, owing to the nature of the ground, he could not dig in his guns. "The fire of this battery at short range", affirms the *Gazette*, "was most effective." In the charge

of the 1st Battalion Royal Highlanders at this point Sergeant G. Burnett added a clasp to his D.C.M.—won at Cuinchy at the beginning of the year—for brilliant leadership in bringing his platoon up to the German wire under cover of the British smoke. Here he continued to set a splendid example by pulling up the stakes of the entanglement until he fell severely wounded.

None fought with greater courage that day than the 1st Battalion Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, especially during their bombing attack on one of the German communication trenches, in the course of which three parties of bombers, including officers, were all either killed or wounded. Another party was then formed from volunteers by Second-Lieutenant Andrew Fraser, and under his courageous leadership—rewarded with the Military Cross—withstood successive attacks by the enemy. Second-Lieutenant Norman Martin, who was also decorated for similar gallantry and determination, joined in the fray first by throwing bombs himself, then expending all the rounds in his revolver, and finally continuing to fire with a rifle. "It was largely due to his coolness and courage that the barricade was held till more bombers had been obtained." Great credit was also due to Corporal W. Coventry, in charge of the bombers, who kept reorganizing the parties in the two different saps, and, with unfailing coolness and resource, maintained touch with the Camerons' headquarters. He was rewarded with the D.C.M., also conferred upon Private H. Timbury, who, when the first three

parties had all become casualties, volunteered to throw bombs until a relief could be found, and bravely assisted later in constructing the barricade.

The savage hatred of the Germans found vent not only in the mad lust of battle, but also in the deliberate shooting of our wounded. This is officially testified in the record of the brave deed which won the Military Cross on this occasion for Second-Lieutenant Beevor Potts, 1st South Wales Borderers, who, after bringing up three boxes of bombs under heavy fire, went out to the rescue of a man lying wounded where the Germans were engaged in this cold-blooded massacre. He had carried the soldier 150 yards, and reached within a few paces of his trench, when the unfortunate man was shot dead.

By such acts of infamy had the Germans long since abandoned their last vestiges of chivalry in war. Their hatred was ever more implacable in defeat, and the loss of ground behind the Vermelles-Hulluch road had infuriated them beyond measure. When the fresh British attack had subsided, the new front, as described by Sir John French, ran from our old line at a point about 1200 yards south-west of the southern edge of Auchy-Lez-La Bassée, and thence through the main trench of the Hohenzollern Redoubt in an easterly direction 400 yards south of the southern buildings of Fosse No. 8 to the south-western corner of the Quarries. We also held the south-eastern corner of the Quarries, our trenches running thence south-east, parallel to, and 400 yards from

the south-western edge of Cité St. Elie, to a point 500 yards west of the north edge of Hulluch. The line then ran along the Lens-La Bassée road to the Chalk Pit 1500 yards north of the highest point of Hill 70, and turned south-west to a point 1000 yards east of Loos Church, where it bent south-east to the north-west slope of Hill 70, continuing along the western slopes of that hill, and bending south-west to a point 1200 yards south of Loos Church, whence it ran due west back to our old line. The chord of the salient thus created in the enemy's line measured along our old front was 7000 yards in length; the depth of the salient at the Chalk Pit was 3200 yards.

In all the operations represented by these topographical gains the work of the Royal Engineers had of necessity been arduous and incessant. Their unflagging energy, as well as their valour and high standard of technical skill, were warmly acknowledged by Sir John French in his dispatch of October 15:

"Throughout the supreme test of war these qualities", he wrote, "have never been found wanting, thus reflecting the greatest credit on the organization of the corps as a whole, and on the training of the officers and men individually. The spirit which is imbued in all ranks from the base ports to the front trenches and beyond is the same. No matter where or how the *personnel* of the corps has been employed, devotion to duty and energy have been ever present."

The Commander-in-Chief drew particular attention to the admirable work of the field units and army troop companies of the Royal Engineers—work



Mine Warfare on the Western Front: exploding a mine under an enemy trench

which almost invariably had to be performed under the most trying circumstances by night as well as by day. "Demanding qualities of whole-hearted courage and self-sacrifice, combined with sound judgment and instant action, the work of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men has been beyond all praise." Two days before these words were written a corporal of the Royal Engineers had nobly emphasized their truth by winning the Victoria Cross during the gas attack of the North Midland Territorials at the Hohen-zollern Redoubt. Some of the gas cylinders started leaking while our trenches were full of men, waiting for the moment to charge. Thereupon Corporal J. Lennox Dawson, 187th Company, Royal Engineers, in order to be the better able to give directions to his sappers, and to clear the infantry out of the sections of the trench that were full of gas, coolly walked backwards and forwards along the parapet, fully exposed to a murderous fire. Finding three leaking gas cylinders, he rolled them some 16 yards away from the trench, under the same bom-

bardment, and then fired rifle bullets into them to let the gas escape. "There is no doubt", as the *Gazette* remarks, "that the cool gallantry of Corporal Dawson on this occasion saved many men from being gassed."

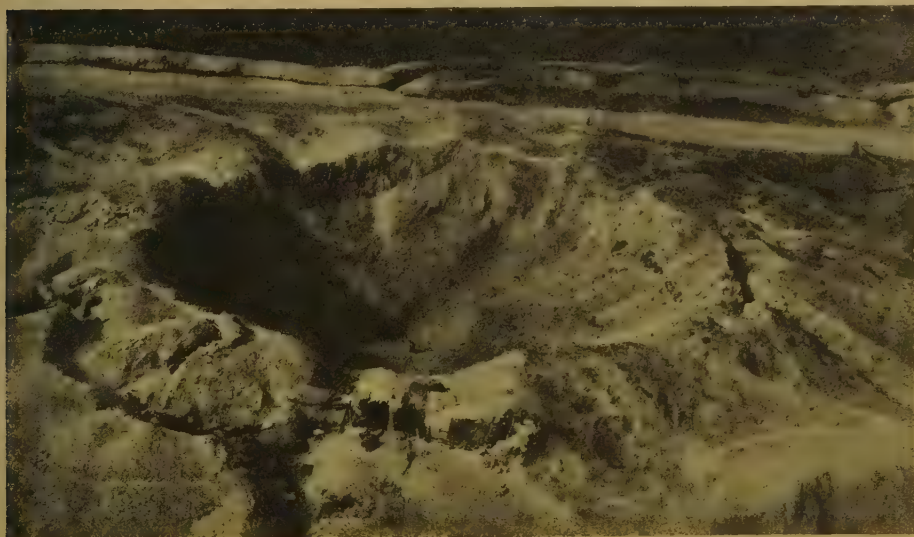
During the same gas attack Second-Lieutenant D. M. Wilson, attached to the 186th Company Royal Engineers, won the Military Cross for saving a similarly critical situation. A smoke grenade had been accidentally thrown into a sap containing stores of explosive bombs. There was imminent danger owing to the burning phosphorus. Instantly realizing this, Second-Lieutenant Wilson, whose conduct, it is officially recorded, was marked by outstanding coolness and bravery throughout the attack, groped his way along the sap, secured the grenade, and hurled it out of harm's way into the open. A shower of honours also fell to the 189th Company Royal Engineers for other deeds of heroism in this memorable attack. Corporal W. Macfarlane, for example, with others, was working the gas cylinders at a spot which was being heavily



shelled. Presently a shell landed in his bay, wounding one man and burying most of the cylinders. Sticking to his post he covered up the exposed cylinders with sand-bags, and, while dressing the wounded man, was himself wounded. It is officially vouched for, that when met by his officer on his way to the dressing station, covered with blood and very faint, he replied, on being asked what had happened: "A shell fell in the bay and wounded me, but none of the cylinders was hurt, sir!"

The 189th Company had reason to be proud of its corporals on this occasion, four others receiving the D.C.M. besides Macfarlane. After the gas attack Corporal J. G. Midgley with great bravery went over the parapet to bring in a wounded Highlander, but was himself hit in the thigh by a piece of shell. Without a moment's

hesitation, Corporal W. E. Lee, who had been standing by Midgley's side before he climbed out, followed in his wake, and regardless of all personal danger brought in the wounded man. "Both non-commissioned officers", adds the record, "gave a fine exhibition of devotion to duty." The other two corporals of the 189th Company were R. Lister and J. E. Jeffrey, who voluntarily faced death in the same heroic fashion, bringing wounded into safety after the infantry advance. Throughout the night and during the following morning one of the Territorial officers of the Royal Engineers, Captain Patrick E. Welchman, of the 1st/2nd North Midland Field Company, similarly distinguished himself in collecting and bringing in the wounded under difficult and most dangerous circumstances. It was not the first time that Captain Welch-



Mine Warfare on the Western Front: photograph of the crater caused by a mine explosion

man's name had been brought to notice for gallantry of this description. On this occasion he was awarded the Military Cross.

Over the La Bassée Canal, near Givenchy Ridge, another company of the Royal Engineers—the 176th—was at the same time adding further lustre to the achievements of the famous corps thus singled out for special mention by the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief. One of the officers had been sent out with a party of men to reconnoitre the mine craters in front of the advance line round this war-scarred ridge.

"Having found no signs of German occupation of certain of the craters", states the *Gazette*, "the officer sent back the men of his party, but remained himself with Second-Corporal M'Arthur, who would not leave him alone, his object being to reconnoitre the old German crater. The officer and Second-Corporal M'Arthur crawled out towards this crater, but when half-way there a machine-gun opened fire from the north, and in trying to return to the sap the officer was hit. In spite of the machine-gun continuing to search the bank, Second-Corporal M'Arthur went out again from the sap, and managed to drag the officer half-way in. He then went back again, got a rope, and with great bravery and determination succeeded in bringing him in."

M'Arthur's unflinching devotion was rewarded with the D.C.M. All through the autumn campaign of 1915 the work of the Royal Engineers everywhere along the line justified the praise of the Commander-in-Chief. Pages could be filled with the records of their gallant deeds preserved in the files in the *Gazette*. One or two further cases must unfortunately suffice as typical

of the rest. The first takes us back to the demonstration at Hooge while the Allied Offensive was being launched at Loos. Second-Lieutenant G. F. Watson, of the Welsh Territorial Field Company, Royal Engineers, crawled out with two men during the night preceding the attack and cut the enemy's wire. During the assault itself, with a party of 12 sappers and 25 infantry, he dug 80 yards of a communication trench in two hours under very heavy fire, which caused nearly three-quarters of his men to become casualties. He then reported for instructions, and took the remnants of his party into the captured positions in order to consolidate them. When the retirement was ordered, he reached our original trenches with only one sergeant and three or four men. The sergeant was killed almost at once, but Second-Lieutenant Watson, finding the trenches unoccupied, collected about twenty-five men of the 4th Gordon Highlanders and held on until relieved by another battalion after dark. No D.S.O. was ever more richly deserved.

One branch of the same splendid Corps to come to the front in the ceaseless war of mining and counter-mining, and one to which Sir John French directed particular attention, was that of the Tunnelling Companies, to whose enterprise and intrepidity he rendered no more than justice when he wrote:—

"These companies, officered largely by mining engineers, and manned by professional miners, have devoted themselves whole-heartedly to the dangerous work of offensive and defensive mining, a task ever

accompanied by great and unseen dangers. It is impossible within the limits of a dispatch to give any just idea of the work of these units, but it will be found, when their history comes to be written, that it will present a story of danger, of heroism, and of difficulties surmounted worthy of the best traditions of the Royal Engineers, under whose general direction their work is carried out."

Some isolated episodes in this story were every now and then revealed in the Honours Lists, many of them reminiscent of the heroism which invariably attends a mining disaster at home. On the very day after Sir John French's dispatch was written a typical incident occurred near the Hulluch Quarries, where a shaft had been discovered close to our front line of trenches. The sentry reported having seen two of the enemy moving along a gallery leading out of the shaft. Second-Lieutenant W. A. Pope, attached to the 170th Tunnelling Company, formed the opinion that the enemy must be mining, but the only way to find out was to go and see. So, with Corporal P. O'Brien, of the same company, he descended the shaft by means of a rope-ladder, fully expecting to find the enemy waiting to receive him. As it happened no gallery was found, but the prompt action, in the words of the record of the subsequent award of the Military Cross in the case of the officer, and Distinguished Conduct Medal in that of the corporal, showed courage of the highest order. More thrilling still was the experience, earlier in the same month, of Second-Lieutenant H. W. E. Williamson, who had joined the

172nd Tunnelling Company from the Honourable Artillery Company, and found the far end of a mine gallery near Ypres full of water. Wading down it alone he discovered a German listening apparatus, which he removed, disconnecting the wire. Pressing on as noiselessly as possible he found that the enemy had holed through from their own mine into our gallery. He promptly returned for explosives, re-entered the gallery with a small party, laid a charge as the enemy began firing on them, and having exploded it successfully closed the breach. Second-Lieutenant Williamson was decorated for this with the Military Cross, also won on November 10 by two other Subs of the same company—Second-Lieutenant R. B. Brisco and Second-Lieutenant Arthur Hibbert. On that occasion our men holed through into an enemy gallery, which these two officers promptly investigated, Second-Lieutenant Brisco exploring to the left and his comrade to the right. A distance of some 80 yards brought Brisco suddenly in sight of an enemy working party, and of one German close at him. This German he shot with his revolver, and retired under fire to rejoin his brother-officer. Hibbert having meantime decided to blow in the enemy's gallery, Brisco held the enemy off while he fetched sand-bags and explosives, whereupon, together, they placed and exploded the charge, "thus", to quote from the *Gazette*, "forestalling the Germans".

The Military Cross was also won by Second-Lieutenant F. Bell, attached to the 173rd Tunnelling Company, after the Germans had broken through



into one of our mining galleries at Cambrin. Descending into the working under fire, Second-Lieutenant Bell cleared out the enemy in the dark with his revolver, and held the ground till a sand-bag revetment could be built.

On the same day another of these fearless young officers of the Royal Engineers, Second-Lieutenant E. C. Scott, of the 178th Tunnelling Company, crowned a series of similar feats near Tambour du Clos by leading a party down a shaft 55 feet deep, and saving the lives of six men who were gassed. "He remained down", says the *Gazette*, "till he thought all were rescued, and was then brought up, himself almost overcome, and laid on a bed; but on hearing that all the miners had not been rescued he endeavoured to return, although still suffering from the effects of gas."

Such were some of the heroic deeds of the Tunnelling Companies in this fearsome underground warfare, picked at random from a multitude of similar incidents, and who shall say that every word of Sir John French's generous tribute was not richly deserved? "Notwithstanding the heavy casualties sustained by all ranks", he concluded, "the esprit de corps of the Royal Engineers is such that the new material is at once animated by the same ideals and the same devotion to duty is maintained." An illustration of this was

afforded on October 2, when one of our mine galleries at Laventie was rendered highly dangerous through the introduction of gas by the enemy, all the men at work falling unconscious from the fumes. Second-Lieutenant A. K. Dodds, attached to the 181st Company, Royal Engineers, from the 5th (Territorial) London Regiment, thereupon entered the gallery, and forcing his way through the gas rescued one of the party. Twice afterwards he re-entered the gallery, and continued his self-sacrificing attempts until he collapsed and became unconscious himself. Second-Lieutenant Dodds afterwards received the Military Cross, while the D.C.M. was bestowed upon Lance-Corporal Allsopp, "always the first to volunteer for any dangerous underground duty", who shared in the work of rescue.

Mining and countermining, with ceaseless bombing activity round such hotly disputed points as the Hohenzollern Redoubt and the Quarries, combined with intermittent artillery action, night raids on enemy trenches, and an increasing number of battles in the air, remained the chief outstanding features of the British campaign on the Western front to the close of the year 1915—and the end of Sir John French's historic command in France and Flanders.

F. A. M.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE TURKISH MASSACRES IN ARMENIA

(1915)

Political Reason for the Armenian Massacres—The Armenian Population—Direct Orders from Constantinople—Method of Murder—Deportation—Sultanieh the "Agricultural Colony" of Anatolia—The Road to Aleppo—The Swamps and the Desert—Mountain Villages wiped out—Mush, Sasun, Sairt—Trebizond and its 8000 Victims—Evidence.

IT may have been no more than a sinister coincidence that the massacres of the Armenians by the Turks began at a time when Greece was held to be wavering in the balance of neutrality; but the massacres were carried out with such evidence of organization and design that their menace to Greece cannot be overlooked, and it probably was not intended by their authors that the Greeks should miss it. Several millions of Greeks, traders and commercial men, are scattered along the coast of Turkey in Asia; and the Armenians and the Greeks are alike in this, that in the coast towns they represent the more intelligent and better educated part of the population. The Armenians are more widely scattered among the Turkish towns and villages, of which they are natives, and in the hills Armenian villages form distinct communities. From towns and villages the Turkish army recruits many Armenians as soldiers, and some of these were destined on their return to find that their children had been killed, and their women outraged or sold into something more degrading than slavery. The Greeks are no more than colonists on the Turkish littoral, but from the fate of the Armenians

they might learn what would happen to themselves if, when they had declared war against Turkey, the sweepings of the Turkish army and the Turkish gaols were let loose upon their homes. Lord Bryce declared that as far as could be ascertained the policy of massacre, like the policy of frightfulness in Belgium which it took for a model, had been entertained for some time by the gang of ruffians who then handled the reins of the Turkish Government. With them the only question was that of selecting the moment to put it into practice. When the moment was ripe, orders were sent out from Constantinople to the local authorities at some fifty towns and villages in the Turkish Empire.

The orders were precise and uniform, and they were carried out with exactitude by most of the Governors, and with gusto by some of them. What happened was generally as follows; and it continued to happen from April onwards. On a given day the streets of the town or village were occupied by the local gendarmerie with fixed bayonets, and the Governor summoned all able-bodied men of Armenian race who had not been enlisted to present themselves. "Able-bodied" received a liberal interpreta-

tion, for it included any male between fifteen and seventy years of age. These were all marched out of the town by the gendarmes. They had not far to go; for in some secluded valley in the hills they were met by Kurds and brigands who helped the gendarmes to shoot them down or cut their throats for the sake of what they carried. The gendarmes then marched back at their leisure to the town to begin the second act. As all the men had gone there was not even the pitiful possibility of resistance for those who remained—the women, the children, the bed-ridden, and perhaps those who had been able to bribe the executioners to allow them to keep their lives. To these was now communicated an order for deportation. They were given ten days, perhaps less, never more than a fortnight, in which to prepare to be marched away to some unknown destination. They were to be deported. Thus was a whole people, not merely a village or a town here and there, uprooted and driven into the wilderness.

Wilderness it literally was, for many of the Armenians who survived this appalling exodus died in the swamps about Aleppo or the desert about Deir-ez-Zor. These were two of the camps which the Turks called "agricultural colonies"; the third was at Sultanieh, a village of the Konia district in the middle of Anatolia. Anatolia is a tableland. In the middle of the plateau it is swept by winds; it is bare and bitterly cold. None but a few wandering tribes can inhabit there. Here a thousand Armenian families, or what was left of them after thirty days' march over mountain tracks, were

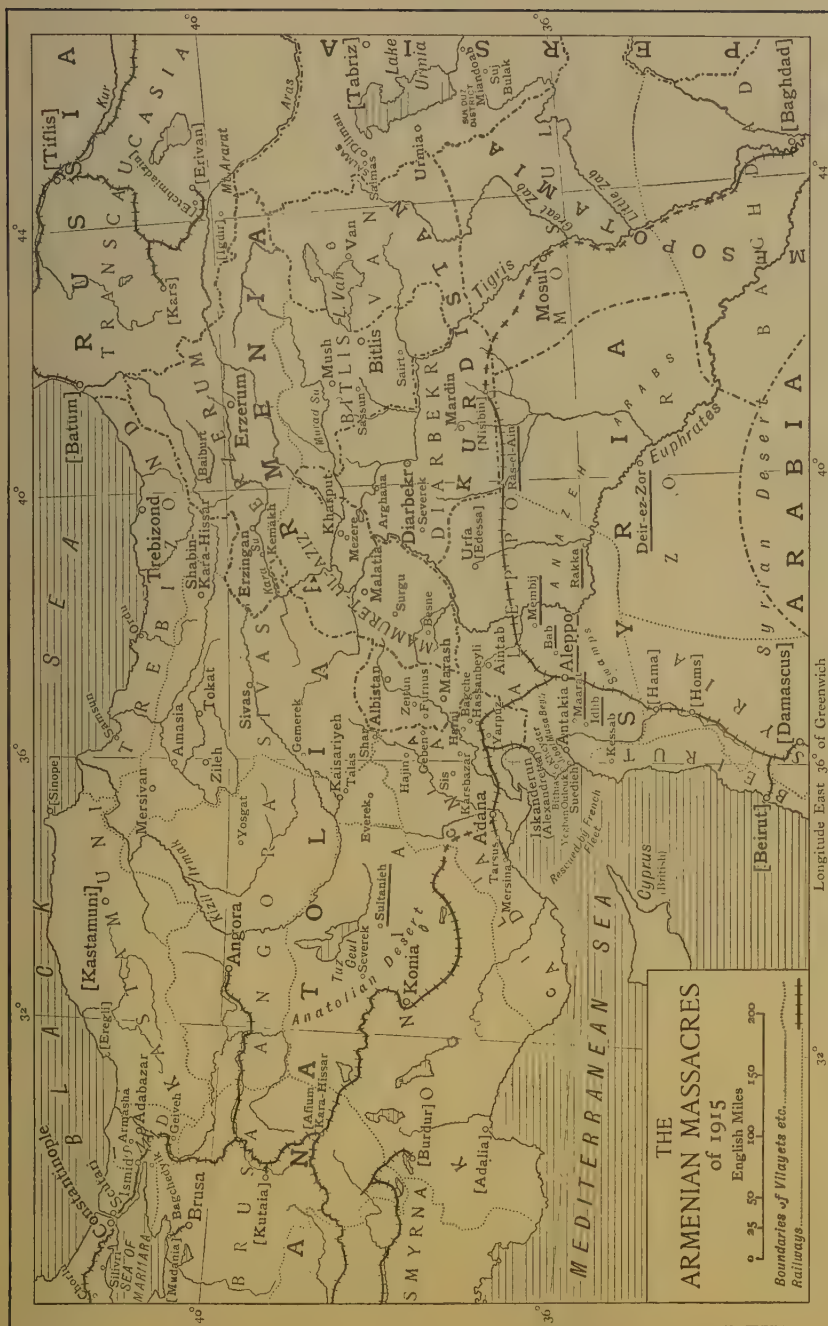
left to shift for themselves, with only fifty men among a helpless flock of women and children.

But Sultanieh was a place of refuge compared with the charnel-houses to which the greater part of the Armenian remnant was driven. Many thousands were sent to Aleppo, the capital of Northern Syria, for dispersal among the Arabian provinces beyond. These provinces are the lands which slope south-eastwards to the open oven of the Persian Gulf. Aleppo was but a temporary oasis for the deported and harassed pilgrims. To the south-east of Aleppo, about a day's journey away, the river which waters the town buries itself in swamps. The first comers were sent here, to be killed off by malaria; but the swamps would not accommodate them all, and the later batches were sent a five days' farther march to Deir-ez-Zor, where they perished of exposure, hunger, and thirst, or were raided by the Bedouin Arabs. An eye-witness of Aleppo, who saw a party of these tragic pilgrims arrive, wrote:—

"On August 2, 1915, about 800 middle-aged and old women, accompanied by children under the age of ten years, arrived afoot from Diyarbekir, after forty-five days *en route*, and in the most pitiable condition imaginable. They report the taking of all the young women and girls by the Kurds, the pillaging even of the last bit of money and other belongings, of starvation, and hardship of every description. Their deplorable condition bears out their statement in every detail. . . . The governor of Der-el-Zor, who is now at Aleppo, says there are 15,000 Armenians in his city."

It will be noted that the eye-witness





Every place marked in this map, with the exception of those included in square brackets, was the scene of deportations, or massacres, or both, between April and November, 1915. (Dhimstika, Maigara, and Keshun, in Thrace, are too far west to be included, but they must be added to the list.) The nine places underlined were the destinations marked out, for such of the deported Armenians as reached them, as waiting-places for death.

(The map is redrawn, by permission, from Mr. Arnold Toynbee's brochure on the Massacres, published by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton.)

at Aleppo spoke only of middle-aged and old women. The others had been—spared. Some of the women and girls were sold into Turkish harems before the march began; and the gendarmes who accompanied the caravans had no intention of doing their dirty work for nothing. The youngest and most handsome women were sold at every village where they passed the night; and these girls were trafficked in hundreds in the markets of the Turkish Empire. The victims were Christian people, many of them well educated, refined. It seems almost an insult to speak of them patronizingly as better-class people; but that is what in ordinary language they would be called. These were the refugees who were plundered, outraged, beaten,

starved, whose track was marked by the dead and the dying, many of whom drowned themselves in the Euphrates; but many others of whom were saved that trouble by captors who drove them there and shot them as they struggled in the water.

Sometimes the task of the butchers was not so easy. The mountaineers and peasants in the hill villages fought for their lives and paid the penalty by being wiped out. In the town of Mush the Armenians, under the leadership of Gotoyan and others, entrenched themselves in the churches and stone-built houses and fought for four days. But the Turkish artillery made short work of all the Armenian defences, and every defender was killed fighting. When silence fell on the ruins, the Moslem rabble dragged out the women and children and drove them into two large camps. A telegram that was received by Lord Bryce in London, January 12, 1916, recorded that the Turkish governor of Mush had disposed of 1500 refugees from this and from other villages by drowning them in the Euphrates. A shorter way of disposing of the women and children in the refugee camps was by burning them. Fire was set to large wooden sheds at Alijan, Magrakom, Khasgokh, and other Armenian villages in which the women and children were imprisoned, and many of them were burned to death. In the hill country of Sasun the tragedy of Mush was repeated. Fifteen hundred mountaineers with their wives and children were surrounded, and fought till they were exterminated. At Sairt Djevet Bey cleared the town with his



Armed with a Browning Revolver: a refugee Armenian girl

butcher battalions; at Bitlis, the men were slaughtered according to precedent, the younger women distributed among the rabble, the "useless" lot were driven south, and nobody knows what has become of them. It is believed that they were drowned in the Tigris.

The massacre at Trebizond took place before Italy declared war on Turkey, and is attested by the Italian Consul. Here many of the Moslems tried to save their Christian neighbours, and offered them shelter in their houses, but the Turkish authorities were implacable. Obeying the orders which they had received, they hunted out all the Christians, gathered them together, and drove a great crowd of them down the streets of Trebizond, past the fortress to the edge of the sea. There they were all put on board sailing boats, carried out some distance on the Black Sea, and there thrown overboard and drowned. Nearly the whole Armenian population—from 8000 to 10,000—of Trebizond has disappeared, some in this way, some by slaughter, some by being sent to death elsewhere. These occurrences are not mere tales, exaggerated by rumour, distorted by distance. They rest on



The French as Saviours of Armenians: French sailors embarking women and children refugees

every kind of converging evidence; on the evidence of traders, of missionaries, of travellers, of neutrals. The bulk of the evidence was collected by the American Missionary Board, which had a wide network of missions in Armenia, and the evidence was sifted by an independent American committee. Some of the most damning details were furnished by Swiss missionaries, among them Fräulein Beatrice Rohner, an eye-witness, who published them in a German-Swiss periodical *Sonnenaufgang* (Sunrise) at Basle. Every successive piece of evidence increased the horror of the story and confirms the dreadful certainty of its truth. Improving on the plan of their German teachers, the Turks murdered half a million innocent people.

E. S. G.



## CHAPTER XVI

## AN EPOCH IN THE WAR

October—December, 1915

King George revisits the Western Front—Tour with the French President—Reviews of the British Army—His Majesty's Accident—The King's Special Order to his Troops—Inspections by the Queen—His Majesty's Farewell Message to the Indian Troops—Lord Kitchener's Mission—Closer Co-ordination of Allied Efforts—Common War Council—Changes and Developments—Another Turn of the Tide—Resignation of Sir John French—His Unforgettable Services—Viscount French of Ypres—Succeeded by Sir Douglas Haig—Other Changes in the British Command—Situation at the End of 1915—The King's Pledge of Victory.

ONE or two incidents call for mention before we discuss the momentous change in the high command on the Western front towards the close of 1915. It was fitting that His Majesty King George should pay another visit to this drama of war before the curtain fell on one of its decisive acts. The enemy was still battling for his lost ground at Loos when the King renewed his acquaintance with his army in the field, landing on October 21, the day following another futile infantry attack against our line from the Quarries to Hulluch. As on the previous visit of His Majesty to the front there was nothing of the pomp of a ceremonial display in this unostentatious tour of the British war zone, but its cheering and inspiring influence was incalculable among all the battalions who had served their king and country so well during the stupendous conflict of the preceding weeks. Received by Sir John French on landing he first visited the wounded in the hospitals and the various base depots, moving up four days later to the front, where, at a point not far from the spot at which the armies of the Allies

were then united, he met President Poincaré and M. Millerand, the French Minister of War. The illustrious party spent the day together in visiting the chief points of military interest in the district, as well as various units of the fighting forces, President Poincaré also marking the occasion by the bestowal of the Croix de Guerre upon the Prince of Wales, several British officers being decorated at the same time with the Legion of Honour. The next day will be remembered for its impressive review of the French Second Colonial Corps in the neighbourhood of Amiens, the King and President, accompanied this time by General Joffre, remaining together at the saluting point for a march-past which showed how flawless was the discipline of these magnificent troops.

Then came a day with our own Second Army, including reviews of units of the Canadian Corps and detachments from other divisions, as well as a visit to a section of the Royal Flying Corps.

"When the King went out to review his battalions", to quote from the graphic account of this visit by an eye-witness, Mr. Philip Gibbs, the *Daily Chronicle* cor-

respondent, "the scenes through which he passed were not staged for a Royal visit in the style of peace. The business of war was going on, the workaday routine of it—the men and the guns could not take a holiday—and in many villages along the roads there was only a momentary pause in the ebb and flow of the active tide be-

hospitals, aeroplanes soared singing overhead, the hammers of army blacksmiths resounded from wayside barns, men were busy in their bivouacs and building huts for winter lodgment, and all the song of war rose up to the King as he passed in his car, with now and then the boom of a great gun, or the rumbling reverberation of



His Majesty's Visit to the French Front, October, 1915: the King—with President Poincaré on his right—meets General Joffre

To the extreme left is the Prince of Wales.

hind the lines. Guns and their limbers rattled over the cobble stones, ammunition wagons went up with their supplies, mule teams were being groomed in wayside paddocks, wood-cutters in khaki were chopping logs for trenches, dispatch riders side-slipped on their scurry to Divisional Head-quarters, the reliefs went up to the fighting lines, battalions just out of the trenches marched to their rest billets, splashed to the eyebrows in the first mud of winter, staff-officers swept by in cars that sprayed up fountains of water from the wayside puddles, ambulances with the latest wounded came down to clearing

field batteries, telling of the grim significance behind all this life."

The succeeding day had been planned for a series of further reviews of His Majesty's Army. All went well at the first inspection in the morning, when the honour fell to a composite brigade of the First Army, including representative units of the Londoners and Highlanders who had won their way to Loos on September 25. The King, accompanied by an



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With the King in France: His Majesty's greeting to General Officers of the Canadian contingents

escort of generals and staff-officers, departed amid the cheers of his troops for another parade ground about a mile distant, where the second review was to take place. It was at the close of this inspection that the unfortunate accident happened which terminated the Royal tour with dramatic suddenness. The King had just completed the second review when the assembled troops, standing but a few yards from His Majesty, suddenly burst into volleys of cheers. Startled by the outburst the King's horse, though thoroughly trained to military sounds and movements, reared right up; was brought down to its forefeet; then reared again, this time, unhappily, falling, and bringing His Majesty to the ground pinned underneath.

Severely bruised and shaken His Majesty was helped to his motor-car by several officers who rushed immediately to his assistance, and the review both of the Guards and the Indians, planned for the afternoon, had perforce to be abandoned. So, too, had all the rest of His Majesty's engagements, for though he made light of the inevitable pain, his injuries rendered his confinement to bed essential for some considerable time. Four days later he was able to be removed by ambulance from General Head-quarters, and crossed the Channel in the hospital ship *Anglia*, which was carrying wounded men from the front, under the Red Cross flag. A little more than a fortnight later this very hospital ship, as shown in the illustra-



tion on p. 279, was mined, and sank with a loss of eighty-five lives.

Before leaving General Headquarters His Majesty issued the following Special Order of the Day to his armies in the field:—

*“Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers, and Men:*

“I am happy to have found myself once more with my armies.

“It is especially gratifying to me to have been able to see some of those that have been newly created. For I have watched with interest the growth of these troops from the first days of recruit drill and through the different stages of training until their final inspection on the eve of departure for the front as organized divisions. Already they have justified the general conviction then formed of their splendid fighting worth.

“Since I was last among you, you have

fought many strenuous battles. In all you have reaped renown and proved yourselves at least equal to the highest traditions of the British Army.

“In company with our noble Allies you have baffled the infamous conspiracy against the law and liberty of Europe, so long and insidiously prepared.

“These achievements have involved vast sacrifices. But your countrymen who watch your campaign with sympathetic admiration will, I am well assured, spare no effort to fill your ranks and afford you all supplies.

“I have decorated many of you. But had I decorated all who deserve recognition for conspicuous valour, there would have been no limit, for the whole army is illustrious.

“It is a matter of sincere regret to me that my accident should have prevented my seeing all the troops I had intended, but during my stay amongst you I have seen enough to fill my heart with admira-



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Before the King's Accident: troops at the Front cheering His Majesty on the approach of the royal car

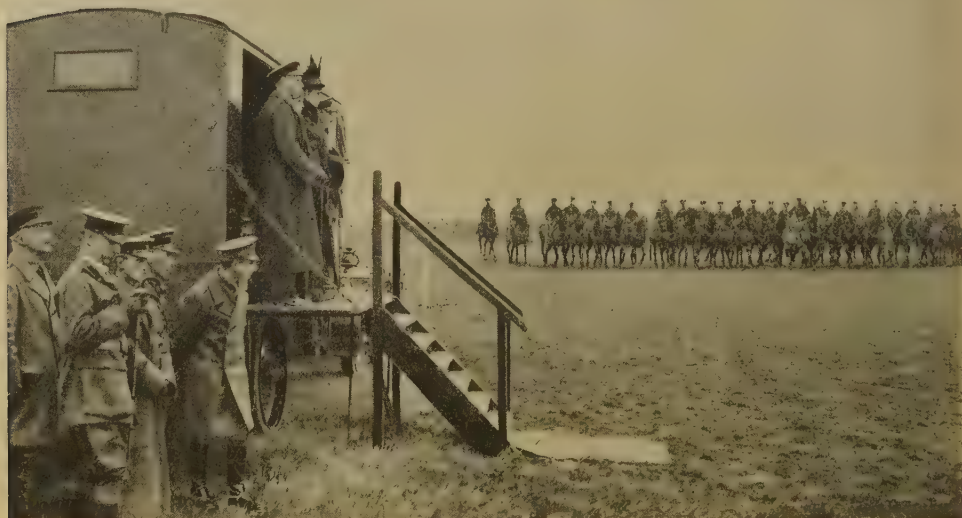
tion of your patient cheerful endurance of life in the trenches: a life either of weary monotony or of terrible tumult. It is the dogged determination evinced by all ranks which will at last bring you to victory. Keep the goal in sight, and remember it is the final lap that wins.

"November 1, 1915.

"GEORGE, R.I."

It was one of many greetings from

Palace. The Indian divisions, about this time, departed from the Western front as silently and safely as they had landed, upwards of twelve months before. They had now been summoned "to uphold the Izzat of the British Raj", in the words of the King-Emperor's message on their first arrival from India, "against an



The Queen doing Duty for the King after His Majesty's Accident: a royal review of troops in training at Aldershot

The Queen was accompanied on this occasion by Princess Mary and Prince Albert. A motor lorry was used as a saluting base. When the photograph was taken, some of the Irish Cavalry were marching past.

the King which helped to steel our soldiers' hearts to endure, and increased their confidence in the final victory. While His Majesty remained confined to his room at Buckingham Palace, slowly but steadily recovering, the Queen did duty for him on a number of notable occasions, inspecting troops, for example, at Aldershot, Winchester, and Salisbury, and decorating Indian officers at Buckingham

Palace. The Indian divisions, about this time, departed from the Western front as silently and safely as they had landed, upwards of twelve months before. They had now been summoned "to uphold the Izzat of the British Raj", in the words of the King-Emperor's message on their first arrival from India, "against an aggressive and relentless enemy" in another theatre of the war, after playing a part in the Western campaign, side by side with British troops, which the whole Empire will never forget. At a parade of the Indian Army Corps, before its departure from France, the following farewell message from the King-Emperor was delivered through the Prince of Wales:—

"Officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Indian Army Corps:

"More than a year ago I summoned you from India to fight for the safety of my Empire and the honour of my pledged word on the battle-fields of Belgium and France. The confidence which I then expressed in your sense of duty, your courage, and your chivalry, you have since then nobly justified.

"I now require your services in another field of action; but before you leave France I send my dear and gallant son, the Prince of Wales, who has shared with my armies the dangers and hardships of the campaign, to thank you in my name for your services, and to express to you my satisfaction.

"British and Indian comrades-in-arms, yours has been a fellowship in toils and hardships, in courage and endurance often against great odds, in deeds nobly done in days of ever-memorable conflict. In a warfare waged under new conditions, and in peculiarly trying circumstances, you have worthily upheld the honour of the Empire and the great traditions of my army in India.

"I have followed your fortunes with the deepest interest, and watched your gallant actions with pride and satisfaction. I mourn with you the loss of many gallant officers and men. Let it be your consolation, as it was their pride, that they freely gave their lives in a just cause for the honour of their Sovereign and the safety of my Empire. They died as gallant soldiers, and I shall ever hold their sacrifice in grateful remembrance.

"You leave France with a just pride in honourable deeds already achieved and with my assured confidence that your proved valour and experience will contribute to further victories in the new fields of action to which you go.

"I pray God to bless and guard you and to bring you back safely, when the final victory is won, each to his own home—there to be welcomed with honour among his own people."

Every day now found the Allies, having taken the measure of their task, acting in closer solidarity, and gradually so co-ordinating their efforts that the mistakes of the past might be rectified, and the full strength of all the Powers brought to bear at the psychological moment. Lord Kitchener's mission in November—not only to examine the situation in Gallipoli for himself and survey the whole military position in the Eastern theatre, but also to engage in fruitful consultation with the leading statesmen and commanders in France and Italy—was one of many significant moves of the kind. It followed a war conference in London, attended by General Joffre, and was followed by a munitions conference, attended by the military and civil representatives of the French, Russian, Italian, and British nations, at which it was decided unanimously to set up a permanent organization, with a central office, for the conduct of the munition business of all the Allied Powers. Towards the end of November, too, was held in Paris the first meeting of the Allied Council of War, attended by Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Lloyd George, and Mr. Balfour, who were accompanied, among others, by the First Sea Lord, Sir William Robertson, Chief of Sir John French's General Staff, and Colonel Hankey, of the Committee of Imperial Defence. The French representatives were M. Briand, General Joffre, and General Gallieni, the new Minister of War.

The French Ministry had just been reconstructed under M. Briand, but, as his predecessor, M. Viviani, said





Drawn by Christopher Clark

Co-ordinating Allied Strategy: General Joffre leaving the War Office with Lord Kitchener on October 29, 1915, during his first visit to London since the outbreak of the war

in the Chamber of Deputies, all parties were still unanimous in their determination to prosecute the war until Belgium was restored to her economic and political independence, Alsace and Lorraine were recaptured, and German militarism was crushed. M. Briand's anxiety that the existing system of informal and occasional conference should develop into something more definite and better organized was largely responsible for the common War Council thus inaugurated in Paris. Hitherto the Allies, with their scattered theatres of war and lack of complete co-ordination, had fought at a grave disadvantage against an enemy who was not only operating on interior lines but with absolute unity of direction. Not that we had been living all the time in water-tight compartments. As Mr. Asquith pointed out in the Commons on November 10, 1915, we had had our Military Attaché at the Headquarters of General Joffre, and a distinguished French Military Attaché in daily communication with the War Office in London; and we had officers of *liaison* all over the country. The need for closer co-operation had already led to the interchange of distinguished Staff officers; but until the meeting of the Allied War Council towards the end of November there was not the co-ordinated prosecution of the war which the life-and-death struggle had long demanded.

Another meeting of the Allied War Council was held at the French General Headquarters early in December after the return of Lord Kitchener from his Eastern mission, and was preceded by a Franco-British Conference at Calais,

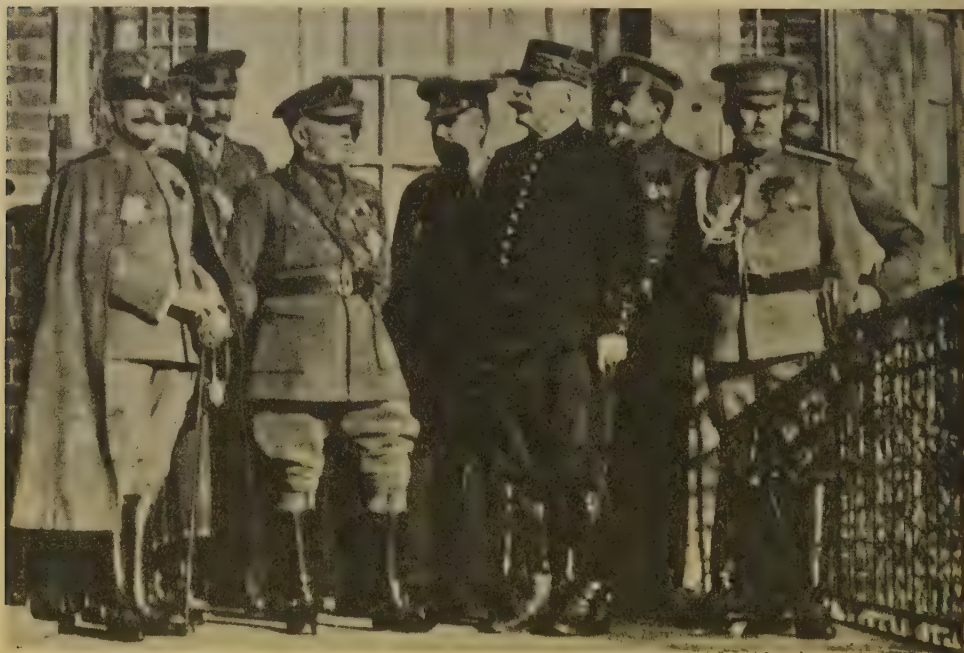
attended, on behalf of Great Britain, by Lord Kitchener, Mr. Asquith, and Mr. Balfour. The Allied Military Council was attended by Sir John French (Britain), General Joffre (France), General Porro (Italy), General Jilinsky (Russia), General Wiellemans (Belgium), and Count Stefanovitch (Serbia). Russia had passed through the crisis of the Germanic invasion unexhausted, and by the end of the year was bracing her sinews for a mightier effort in the new year; while the gallant Serbian army, rescued from its perilous position in the Balkans, was being refitted and reorganized for the hour of its just revenge.

The end of 1915, therefore, marked an epoch in the history of the war which seemed to foretell another turn of the tide. The first spring of the enemy, on which he had staked everything, had been utterly foiled, though there was a critical moment, as Mr. Balfour remarked in a speech at the Guildhall on November 10, 1915, when his long years of unscrupulous calculations were near their accomplishment, for he had the immense advantage at the start of carrying out a plan which no one else knew, and of being fully prepared. The tide of the enemy's fresh successes in 1915 now showed signs of slackening, and the pause could but tell in favour of the side which was gradually accumulating its forces, organizing resources in men and munitions far superior to those at the enemy's disposal. "Clearly," declared Mr. Balfour, "when you reach such a pause in a war like this, it means that what the enemy has to look forward to is an ebb, slow or fast

as the case may be, but an ebb all the same."

It was at this definite phase in the Great World War that Sir John French, after more than sixteen months of unparalleled strain and responsibility at the front, sought and obtained the relief which he had so richly earned.

ness to the soldier who led that small expeditionary force of six British divisions to France on the outbreak of war, and was never found wanting either in the first hour of desperate trial, or during the anxious months that followed, meeting every emergency with the coolness and resource



The Allies' Grand Council of War: a group outside General Joffre's head-quarters, December 6, 1915

The figures in the front row, reading from left to right, are those of General Porro (Italy), Sir John French (Britain), General Joffre (France), and General Jilinsky (Russia).

As Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief in the main theatre of the war during the gravest crisis in the Empire's history, he had earned the undying gratitude of his countrymen and the whole-hearted devotion of his troops.

The historian of the future will be better able than contemporary writers fully to appraise the nation's indebted-

ness to the born soldier, and gradually building up the organization of an army in the field on a Continental scale with the skill of a master mind. The last month of 1915 found Sir John still, to all outward appearances, bearing his sixty-three years with enviable ease, but the wear and tear of commanding a campaign on the prodigious lines of the Great World



War were more than enough to tax the strength of the strongest man.

"Since the commencement of the war," to quote from the official announcement of his resignation from the War Office on December 15, "during over sixteen months of severe and incessant strain, Field-Marshal Sir John French has most ably commanded our armies in France and Flanders, and he has now at his own instance relinquished that command. His Majesty's Government, with full appreciation of and gratitude for the conspicuous services which Sir John French has rendered to the country at the front, have, with the King's approval, requested him to accept the appointment of Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief the troops stationed in the United Kingdom, and Sir John French has accepted that appointment. His Majesty the King has been pleased to confer upon Sir John French the dignity of a Viscount of the United Kingdom."

The country, as Lord Kitchener said in the House of Lords in the following February, felt "that by his invaluable services he had placed us all under an obligation, and rejoiced at the honour conferred by the King which made him a member of that House"; while French tributes assured Sir John that our Allies would never forget the incomparable debt they owed him. Before leaving France the retiring Field-Marshal issued the following Order of the Day to his troops:—

"In relinquishing the command of the British Army in France, I wish to express to the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, with whom I have been so closely associated during the last sixteen months, my heartfelt sorrow in parting with them before the campaign, in which we have been so long engaged together, has been brought

to a victorious conclusion. I have, however, the firmest conviction that such a glorious ending to their splendid and heroic efforts is not far distant, and I shall watch their progress towards this final goal with intense interest, but in the most confident hope.

"The success so far attained has been due to the indomitable spirit, dogged tenacity which knows no defeat, and the heroic courage so abundantly displayed by the rank and file of the splendid army which it will ever remain the pride and glory of my life to have commanded during over sixteen months of incessant fighting. Regulars and Territorials, Old Army and New Army, have ever shown these magnificent qualities in equal degree.

"From my heart I thank them all.

"At this sad moment of parting, my heart goes out to those who have received lifelong injury from wounds, and I think with sorrow of that great and glorious host of my beloved comrades who have made the greatest sacrifice of all by laying down their lives for their country. In saying good-bye to the British Army in France, I ask them once again to accept this expression of my deepest gratitude and heartfelt devotion towards them, and my earnest good wishes for the glorious future which I feel to be assured.

"J. D. P. FRENCH,  
Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief,  
British Army in France.

*"18th December, 1915."*

Lord French, as he must now be called,<sup>1</sup> was succeeded by his right-hand man, General Sir Douglas Haig, who had been singled out for promotion by his brilliant achievements since the very beginning of the war. His able handling of his troops in most of the critical fighting on the British

<sup>1</sup> The full title chosen by the Field-Marshal was that of Viscount French of Ypres and of High Lake in the County of Roscommon.

front had called for special mention in the dispatches of his predecessor, whose chief staff-officer he had been

fifty-four years old—the son of John Haig, J.P., of Cameron Bridge, Fife—he was one of the youngest officers,



General Sir Douglas Haig, commanding the British Army in succession to Lord French

(From a photograph by Elliott & Fry)

French, British, or German, commanding an army on the Western front, but his great record and high soldierly reputation, to quote from Lord Kitchener's speech in the House of Lords on February 15, 1916, were sufficient warrant for the confidence in his success which his countrymen and our Allies felt in him. Only the day before his appointment to the command of the British Army in France and Flanders his election was announced to an honorary fellowship of his old college at Oxford—Brasenose.

Sir Douglas Haig was succeeded in command of the First Army by General Sir Charles Monro, whose efficient handling of affairs in the last phase of the Gallipoli campaign had clearly earned the earliest promotion. Sir Charles Monro, in his turn, was succeeded in the Mediterranean by Lieutenant-General Sir Archibald Murray, Chief of the Imperial General Staff at the Army Head-quarters in London. In one of his dispatches the Field-Marshal

during the early part of the South African War. The new leader, like the old, was a cavalry officer, and a good linguist. Little more than

had referred to Sir Archibald Murray as having "worked night and day unceasingly with the utmost skill, self-sacrifice, and devotion"; and it was

due to the strain of these duties on his health that he was brought back from France, to become Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff, succeeding his namesake, Sir J. W. Murray, in the chiefship a few months later. In this capacity Mr. Asquith afterwards declared that he had rendered the Government help "for which no gratitude can be too warm and no eulogy too high".

Sir Douglas Haig's Chief of Staff at the front was Major-General Launcelot E. Kiggell, who served through the South African campaign before becoming Professor of Military Art at the Staff College, subsequently performing excellent service in a succession of important Staff appointments. Before taking over his new duties he was Assistant to the Chief of the Imperial General Staff. This



General Sir Charles Monro, who succeeded Sir Douglas Haig in command of the First Army  
(From a photograph by Lafayette)

office was now filled by Brigadier-General Robert Whigham, who, having been Sir William Robertson's right-hand man in France, now accompanied him to Whitehall. Lieutenant-General Sir William Robertson had succeeded Sir Archibald Murray as Chief at the Army Head-quarters in London, after following the same officer as Chief of Staff in France at the beginning of 1915.<sup>1</sup>

In Russia, as already stated, the Tsar had assumed the supreme command of his armies a few months previously, when the Grand Duke Nicholas left to prepare his master-stroke in the Caucasus. In France, on December 2, General Joffre had become Commander-in-Chief of all the French forces, and not only of those on the



Major-General L. Kiggell, Chief of the General Staff to Sir Douglas Haig  
(From a photograph by F. Robinson, Camberley)

<sup>1</sup> Some account of Sir William Robertson's brilliant career, with a portrait, will be found in Vol. II, p. 224.



Western front, General de Castelnau, his right-hand man, taking over the immediate command of the French troops in France. Thus, on all hands, the year 1915 closed with vital changes in the higher commands. The issue seemed farther off than ever as the war-circle widened its area; but grave lessons had been learned, and all the Allies, united by ties of heroism and sacrifice, faced the future with resolutions forged anew in the pitiless fires of war. Christmas brought with it a pledge of victory in their Majesties' inspiring message to the British Navy and Army:—

#### CHRISTMAS DAY, 1915

Another Christmas finds all the resources of the Empire still engaged in war, and I desire to convey on my own behalf, and on behalf of the Queen, a heartfelt Christmas greeting, and our good wishes for the New Year to all who on sea and land are upholding the honour of the British name.

In the officers and men of my Navy on whom the security of the Empire depends I repose, in common with all my subjects, a trust that is absolute.

On the officers and men of my Armies, whether now in France, in the East, or in other fields, I rely with an equal faith, confident that their devotion, their valour, and their self-sacrifice will, under God's guidance, lead to victory and an honourable peace.

There are many of their comrades now, alas, in hospital, and to these brave men also I desire with the Queen to express our deep gratitude, and our earnest prayers for their recovery.

Officers and men of the Navy and of the Army, another year is drawing to a close as it began, in toil, bloodshed, and suffering, and I rejoice to know that the goal to which you are striving draws nearer into sight.

May God bless you and all your undertakings.

Published on Christmas morning in Naval and Military Orders throughout the Empire, their Majesties' greeting sent a thrill through all their loyal subjects, strengthened their stern resolve to brace themselves anew for whatever sacrifices another year might bring, and confirmed their faith in ultimate victory.

F. A. M.









